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IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT



IN THE
POWER OF THE SPIRIT

*OR, CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IN THE
LIGHT OF THE BIBLE*

BY REV. W. E. BOARDMAN

AUTHOR OF "THE HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE," "FAITH WORK," ETC., ETC.

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CITY ROAD.

TO ALL
OF EVERY NAME
WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE.

For this cause I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN.

A PREFATORY QUESTION.

IS it good to quarrel with terms when we are agreed as to the realities?

I think not. We may bar ourselves out from exceeding great and precious privileges in this way. And what is more, we may make our objections stumbling stones to others. We may stand in the gate and neither enter ourselves or suffer those who would to go in.

All real Christians agree that it is our privilege to be filled with the Spirit, and that this is the great need of the time. But when this privilege is unfolded and pressed as a baptism, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost, some start back at the term and just stand in the gate.

The New Jerusalem has twelve gates, and each is called by a different name. Yet all who enter by any one of the twelve are really in the City. It would be a strange thing if any one approaching the gate of Benjamin, for example, should stop in it and quarrel with the overarching name and say, it ought to be Judah or Ephraim, and not Benjamin, and so should block up the way.

Let me enter into the City by any gate and by any name and I will praise the name of the Lord, and will not dispraise the name of the gate.

Our Lord Himself is called, in the Scriptures, by as many different names as there are days in the year, a new name to meditate upon each day of the three hundred and sixty-five, and I have no disposition to reject Him in any one of them all. And God forbid that I should put a straw in the way of any one else who would receive Him under any name they may fancy.

The Holy Spirit has many relations to us, and every one of them is precious. Oh, how great and how good is the fulness of them all ! And we have many departments of need which He alone can fill with the fulness of God in Christ Jesus, and how wonderfully gracious when all are given up and filled by Him !

Of all the names by which our great Redeemer and Saviour is called, there is not one that has not a special significance, not one that does not present Him in some relation to us which is not embraced in any other name. And the Holy Spirit, who alone can take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, has to us as many special relations as our Lord Himself. Indeed, as the revealer to us of what there is in Christ for us, the Holy Spirit stands related to us as closely as Christ Himself in every one of His offices in our behalf. One name borne by both the Son and the Spirit is wonderfully significant, *Parakletos*, advocate, patron—one who undertakes our cause for us.

And this does not mean that they plead our cause

with an unwilling Father, for both the Son and the Spirit proceed and come forth from the Father, and the Father's controversy with us is this, that we will not be reconciled with Him through His Son.

But it does mean that they plead the Father's cause with us. They are advocates and patrons of ours from the Father, to bring us into our Father's house and into the inheritance He has for us. And it does mean that they have undertaken for us as our advocates and patrons against all adversaries and all powers above and below.

The Holy Spirit does indeed convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. But it is of sin because they reject the unspeakable grace of God in the gift of His Son. And He does indeed reprove the believer; but it is not the reproof of an adversary, but of a loving advocate, and that because of the lack of faith in Christ. Like the oft-repeated reproof of the disciples by our Lord Himself, it is the loving urgency to have faith. "O fools and slow of heart to believe!" "Let not your heart be troubled." "Only believe." It is only Satan with his hosts who accuses us. His name is the accuser, the adversary. And he can never accuse us effectually except in our own hearts; and then he cannot do it if we give them up and give up our cause into the hands of our Lord and of the Spirit who have undertaken for us.

Filled with the Spirit we are filled with the fulness of God; for He does not come of Himself, but from the Father by the Son. And He does not speak of Himself, but of Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily. In the fulness of His

presence and office work He unfolds the fulness of Christ to us and in us; and as in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead, we have in Him by the Spirit from the Father all the fulness of God. What a marvellous provision for us! How amazing the grace! How wonderful the wisdom! How simple the way! Commit all to Christ, and trust in Him to give the Holy Spirit. Yield all over into the hands of our Advocate, Christ. Accept the gift of the Spirit, another Advocate within. And follow Christ, wholly led by the Spirit, and so walk day by day in the fulness of God.

To me the most wonderful thing about it is, that with such a privilege plainly revealed in the Bible I should ever for a moment have closed my eyes and my heart against it. No, the most wonderful of all is that our God should have borne with me during the years of rejection, until in His love He could overcome me and bring me to accept His unspeakable gift. And now all I can do is to present this same unspeakable gift patiently, perseveringly, and lovingly to others in all the ways the Lord gives me, and beg that the imperfections attaching to the instrument may not prejudice the reception of the gift.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. THE QUESTION OF FACT. The Apostolic Period.—The Middle Ages.—The Later Centuries.—In the Present Period.—New Testament Teaching.—The Pre-Christian Ages.—An Accomplished Physician	1
II. DISTINCT FROM THE NEW BIRTH. Story of the Free-Bondman.—The Lost Inebriate saved	10
III. VERY NIGH THEE. A Long Island Farmer	19
IV. EXCELLENCY OF THE POWER OF GOD	29
V. INFIRMITIES. A Housekeeper.—A Pugilist saved	36
VI. IN EVERY-DAY LIFE. A Christian Gentleman.—A Crisis in the Life of a Book-keeper	44
VII. PRECIOUS IN ALL THINGS	52
VIII. IT SHALL BE MINE	60
IX. PERFECTLY SUITED TO ME	70

	PAGE
X. A GIFT	78
XI. THE GIFT RECEIVED	86
XII. HIS BACK TO THE SUN, LOOKING AT HIS OWN SHADOW. What is it?—A Pastor's Experience.—Why, amongst earnest Christians, so few come into it?—Why do I fail of the Experience?	93
XIII. BOTH SIDES; OR, THE KEY SURRENDERED. The Seventh in Lineal Descent.—A Young Lady Missionary	104
XIV. GOD'S LIKENESS IN MAN. Wherein Man's Likeness to God consists.—How God's Likeness is given to Man.—How God's Image in Man was destroyed.—The Sacredness of God's Image in Man.—The Blessedness of God's Image in Man.—The Fulness of the Image of God in Man upon Earth.—Glimpses of the Glory	114
XV. THE PRESENT TENSE OF FAITH THE PERFECT TENSE OF VICTORY. Your Mistake.—An Officer of high Rank	124
XVI. BEHOLD THIS CHILD	133
XVII. HOW IT CAME TO PASS. Completeness in Christ	142
XVIII. THE BURNING BUSH	154
XIX. FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN. To prevent their Return into Egypt.—To prepare them to dwell in the Land.—The usual Course of Christian Experience.—Unusual Ways.—Every Victory is by Surrender	163

CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
XX. ACROSS THE JORDAN. Moses dead.—Sihon and Og dead.—The Land spied out.—The People surrendered.—The Promise accepted.—The Way unknown to the People.—The Waters not cut off beforehand.—The Double Set of Memorial Stones.—The Reproach of Egypt rolled back.—The Frontlet Token renewed	172
XXI. IN THE LAND. A conquering Life begun.—Progress of the Conquest.—Their Captain was invisible	181
XXII. CALEB AND HIS CITY OF ENCHANTMENT	194
XXIII. KIRJATH-SEPHER, THE CITY OF THE BOOK. Its Captor, his Bride, and their Blessing.—The City of the Book.—A Minute-Man.—The Bridal Position.—The added Blessing	201
XXIV. THE THRONE : FOUNTAIN WITHIN YOU. We in Christ and He in us.—Christ in us our Life.—As the Source of Christian Daily Living.—As the Source of real Worship.—As the Source of Government	210

I.

THE QUESTION OF FACT.

ROM age to age the Lord has raised up men of mark for their spiritual power, by whom He has glorified Himself. However much these men have differed one from another in native endowment and human culture, in two things they have all been alike—they have been great in faith and full of the Holy Ghost. The wealth of their success has been according to the strength of their faith, and the efficiency of their faith has all been due to the fulness of the power of the Spirit upon them.

THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD

ned with the pentecostal gift of the Spirit received the hundred and twenty assembled in the upper chamber in Jerusalem, and that instantaneous experience was the beginning of the wonderful power of the Apostles and Evangelists. From that moment commenced the spread of that experience amongst those who had before, like the Apostles themselves, been converted under the preaching of John the Baptist and of Jesus, and those who were subsequently brought into repentance and remission of sins through the ministry of the Apostles, Evangelists, and their fellow disciples. This resulted in an age sur-

passing by far all ages before or since, for the wonders of God's power wrought amongst men by the hands of His servants in saving the lost.

Along the line of

THE MIDDLE AGES

in the annals of the church there are here and there to be seen lights of magnitude shining out upon the surrounding night. Yet they are few in comparison, and in the testimony of those few it might be impossible to trace the beginning of their superior power to any moment when they came into the power of the Spirit. In truth, the knowledge of the gift of the Spirit as a personal endowment for individual Christians, had been lost. The wily adversary had perverted the doctrine of the Spirit to his own purposes by inducing the church to accept it as the doctrine of a sacerdotal instead of an experimental endowment; as pertaining to priestly authority and not to individual spiritual efficiency. Yet it is entirely legitimate to conclude that all of every age who have shown by their fruits that they had the Apostolic endowment of spiritual power, came into it by an experimental reception of the Spirit not essentially different from that of the Apostles and Evangelists.

They, in fact, stood upon the same ground with all in every age who, without understanding beforehand that there was for them such an experience, or seeing clearly afterwards that it is the privilege of all true Christians, have been led into it by ways they knew not, and have found it a wealth of power and blessing of which they had never dreamed. To this class belong the great lights of the pre-Christian ages, of whom more anon.

Passing along down through

THE LATER CENTURIES,

the case changes materially. Lights of greater magnitude and clearer ray are seen in increasing numbers. Searching the records for their testimony, we find it in many instances very conclusive, and in some very direct, to the point of an instantaneous experience after their conversion, from which dates the beginning of their lives in the power of the Spirit.

Among these may be named people of different lands and various communions, such as Fénelon and Madame Guyon, French Catholics; George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends in England; the Wesleys, founders of Methodism, and their followers Fletcher, Hester Ann Rogers, Mrs. Fletcher, Carvocco and Bramwell, also of England; Malan and D'Aubigné, Swiss Calvinists; and James Brainerd Taylor, an American Presbyterian, all of whom together comprise only a few of the brighter stars in a whole galaxy of shining witnesses. These all testify of themselves that at a certain moment during their Christian course they were suddenly lifted up into Christ and filled with the Spirit in an experience which stood at the beginning of a higher plane of Christian life and power.

IN THE PRESENT PERIOD

we are entering upon a course still in advance of the latest past. Never before has the experience been so distinctly taught, and by so many, as the privilege of all,—never since the primitive days of the Christian church. Never has it been sought by such multitudes; nor ever has there been a time since that day when so many were pressing into it. National camp-meetings expressly for this object; union conve-

tions, and a multitude of weekly prayer-meetings for this purpose exclusively ; and a continually increasing number of monthly periodicals and weekly journals, in which it is advocated, show a state of things hitherto unknown. In the emphasis laid upon this matter, and in the distinctness with which the experience is urged as the privilege of all Christians, we are approaching the example of Christ and His Apostles. In clearness, simplicity, and comprehensiveness, however, we are far behind the first teachers and exemplars of this Christian endowment, and we have a great deal yet to learn from them.

Perhaps in no other one thing is this shown more than in the difference of names given to the experience. Christ and His Apostles gave it one name only ; we call it by many different names. The name they gave it was all-comprehensive. The names we use are all partial and fragmentary in their significance. They expressed the very thing itself radically, in the name used by them. We express one or other of its branches or fruits only by each of the names we use. The name given it in the New Testament is : "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost." The names by which it is now called in various circles are such as these : "Sanctification," "Holiness," "Perfect Love," "The Rest of Faith," and "The Higher Christian Life."

Unquestionably each one of these names expresses some one phase of the blessed experience into which the Christian comes by receiving the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, and therefore each name has peculiar expressiveness, yet no one of them is all-inclusive. In the experience the Christian comes to apprehend God's method of sanctification as by faith and not of works, nor of mingled works and faith. By faith, because it is purely the work of the Spirit, and the Spirit is purely the gift of God, and faith is the Chris-

tian's hand which takes the gift from God. Therefore there is beauty as well as truth in the saying that the great work now rising into prominence is the grand "second step in the Protestant Reformation," because, as the first step was marked by the development of justification by faith, so is this to be by the unfolding of sanctification by faith. "Holiness," by which is meant holiness to the Lord continuously in heart and life, expresses sanctification in perpetuity. "Sanctification," as used in the Bible, expresses the act of setting one's self apart to the Lord, or the condition of being set apart to the Lord (comprehensively, *separation to the Lord*), as Holiness does the active, endless living in devotion to the Lord.

But these are only parts of the one great whole enjoyed by the Christian who has really accepted the Gift of the Holy Spirit, and has Him ever more abiding in him. "Perfect Love," using the term in the same sense as that in which the beloved, loving, lovely Apostle John used it, expresses another and most glorious reality enjoyed by all who receive the Spirit and have Him in His power abiding in them.

"The Rest of Faith" expresses another of these great and sweet realities.

"The Higher Christian Life," as expressive of the Christ-life—Christ in us our life; the life more abundant, as Christ Himself puts it in His sayings: "I am the Life," and "I am come that they might have life, and have it *more abundantly*," indicate another wonderful and precious reality of this experience.

Yet taken all together they do not express the whole. "Power" would be as appropriate as any of the names in use, and as Scriptural, too. "Ye shall receive *power* when the Holy Ghost is come upon you," said our blessed Saviour to His disciples as He was about to leave them and make way for His

spiritual presence by His bodily absence. And power is one of the grand characteristics of this wonderful endowment, not expressed in any of the names now in use for its designation.

Abiding union with Christ, is another grand reality not conveyed in any of them.

Abundant fruitage is another.

Now at last, however,—just now for the first,—we are coming to the apprehension that the experience taught under such various names is the very same as that taught by John the Baptist and our Saviour, and exemplified and urged by the Apostles, Evangelists, and their fellow disciples, under the name of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

This question settled, settles for ever the question of fact concerning the experience as a personal endowment for all Christians who will receive it upon the immutable foundation of

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING.

The first clarion note of the herald of Christ is : “Repent ye !” and the next is, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost !”

When John stood among the multitudes by the Jordan and proclaimed Christ in these words : “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance (change of mind), but there standeth One among you, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose ; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire !”—his words must have fallen on them like a bugle-blast from the skies. “What ! who ! where ! which is He ? What is this new baptism that He will bestow upon us ?” How such exclamations and questions must have passed from lip to lip !

This proclamation by John was confirmed by our

Lord. He, through all His ministry, prepared the way by His teachings, and finally toward the end reiterated the promise to His disciples as from the Father, and unfolded its significance as fully as they were able to receive it, and then at the moment of His ascension He reaffirmed the words of John, saying : " John indeed baptized you with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

The fulfilment of this promise, first in the upper chamber, and then in the temple on the day of pentecost, and afterwards in the case of the Samaritan converts, Apollos and the twelve disciples at Ephesus, fills up the measure of this New Testament teaching, and places the matter as an indisputable fact recorded by divine authority.

Add to this the words of Peter to those who so earnestly cried out on the day of pentecost : " Men, brethren, what shall we do ? " " Repent and be baptized, *every one* of you, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, for the remission of sins, and *ye shall receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is *unto you and to your children, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" These words place the universality of this great Christian privilege beyond question.

Allusion has been made to the great lights of

THE PRE-CHRISTIAN AGES.

No one can doubt, without violence to common sense, that such men as Enoch, who walked with God, Moses, who talked with him ; Abraham, the friend of God ; Elijah, who called down fire upon the altar, and went up in a chariot of fire ; Isaiah, who was purified by fire and all ablaze with it,—had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, whether

they knew it as a distinct experience and general privilege or not.

That these men should not have so known it, is more than probable, because then as yet, God had not revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Jesus had not yet come in the flesh, and the time had not come for the distinctiveness which now obtains in the teaching of the gift of the Holy Ghost in contradistinction from the experience of the new birth.

That they could receive this glorious endowment without knowing about it, as the Apostles did, as a distinct experience, is quite clear, because even now there are similar instances. A single example of this kind will serve as the representative of a class of whom there have been some in every age. With this, these statements concerning the question of fact will end.

AN ACCOMPLISHED PHYSICIAN

came one day into a meeting, where the higher Christian life was the subject of conversation. He was a man of unusual strength and culture, and of manly bearing. He listened and kept his seat as long as he could, then rose and said :

"This is very wonderful ! I have never been in a meeting of this kind before. I have never heard or read a word on this subject until this hour. Yet now I hear things from you, which are as familiar to me as if I had been hearing and reading about them all my days. In telling your experience, you tell mine. Your feelings are mine. Your Saviour as an ever-present Saviour, is mine. I never dreamed that this experience was the privilege of all Christians. I thought it was peculiar to me, and that I had been led into it by my own peculiar condition of bodily health. The fact is, that although I appear strong

and well, I am a very great sufferer, and my life hangs upon a thread which may snap at any moment without the warning of so much as a tick of the clock. In my agony and peril I was driven to cast myself as I was, on Christ. I had long been a Christian, but felt that I was far from being purified from sin and filled with Christ. It was plain to me that I could not purify myself, or even make any great effort to do so. Therefore I just abandoned myself to Jesus to do what He pleased with me, and there left my case and was at rest.

“Very soon after that, without any effort on my part, I began to be filled with the fulness of God, and have been so ever since. It is amazing to me to think how the Saviour manifests Himself to me; not only when I am in prayer or reading the Bible, or in the house of God, or amongst fellow Christians, but when walking the streets, or in a crowded hotel, or railway carriage, or reading a newspaper, Jesus, who is never absent from me, unfolds Himself to me in some new relation, or in some old one renewed, and so fills me with joy that, Episcopalian as I am, I can hardly restrain myself from praising him aloud.”

II.

DISTINCT FROM THE NEW BIRTH.

STORY OF THE FREE-BONDMAN.

YEARS ago there came to the lead mines on the Iowa side of the Mississippi river, a man whose story is one of many,—stranger than fiction,—connected with the by-gone American enormity, African slavery.

He was a slave, intrusted by his master with himself, to go where he pleased and do what he liked; to earn money and pay first for himself and then for his wife and children, at certain stipulated prices.

Mining there was a venture. The average shaft was eighty feet deep, three-fourths in the rock. Some shafts produced nothing; others paid well.

Henry,—that was his name,—found a partner and commenced work. They sunk a shaft to the average depth, and found no paying deposit of ore. This brought them to the bottom of their purse and to the end of the partner's endurance. Henry resolved to go on down alone with his shaft. He could manage to live and keep his tools in repair, by doing now and then a cash job for somebody else, and he changed work with other miners to get help on what he could not do alone in his own shaft.

For awhile he went on cheerfully. By-and-by hope began to fail. Finally he made up his mind to drill

one more hole as deep in the rock as he could, without putting in another blast, and then, if he did not come to an opening, abandon the shaft. As he was lifting and dropping his drill for the last time, suddenly it disappeared and was gone. Then he knew that the long-sought opening was found.

A few eager hours served to open an orifice, through which he let himself down by a rope until his feet rested on the rock below. A moment more was taken in striking a light, when, to his unspeakable delight, he was fairly dazzled by the brilliance of the crystalline ore above, below, and around. He stood amidst the illuminated price of himself, and was glad.

This was his first discovery, and a grand one—it paid for himself, and he was free. This was a joy and a glory. But his wife and children were still in bondage, and his cavern in the rock was stripped of its wealth.

What should he do? Two ways were presented: He could "drift" along the crevice upon the same level with his first discovery, or he could go down deeper for a second store of mineral wealth. Which way should he take? The old miners advised him to "drift." He own heart said "go down," and down he did go; not far before he "struck" another opening, much larger and richer than the first. This time his hopes were abundantly surpassed. His wife and children were emancipated, a fine farm was purchased and stocked, a good house erected and furnished, out of his second discovery, and an ample cash capital was left over to him for business.

The story of this free-bondman is that of many a soul.

God has prepared for us a store of grace and truth in Christ Jesus, ample both to redeem us from bondage and to endow us for service and glory. These stores

of grace are hidden in Christ, and must be discovered to be possessed and enjoyed. They are freely provided and freely bestowed, and are ours the moment we accept and discover them. They have to be searched for as for hid treasure, or they will not be found. We seek for them only when pressed by a sense of our need. Our necessities are two-fold, and the discoveries to meet them are made one at a time. The first great felt want that arises in the soul is that of deliverance from condemnation and death. When we discover the grace of God in Christ Jesus, by which this want is met, it is glorious indeed. Like Miriam and Moses, we sing the song of triumph on the hither bank of the Red Sea, and rejoice with unspeakable joy in redeeming love.

The second great necessity, as it arises, is that of endowment. Liberty does not suffice,—power is needed as well. Like Israel delivered from bondage, we find ourselves in a wilderness, often hungry and thirsty ; and when we come up to the borders of the land with its flowing abundance, we start back from going in to possess it, because its high walls and giants appal us. Then comes the question, What shall we do to obtain the needed endowment? Shall we "drift" on the level of our past discovery, in the hope of gradual gain, or shall we strike down for a deeper and richer store of grace and truth?

Alas for us! too many of us try the wrong way first, and some continue it to the end, and so fail of the grand discovery they might otherwise make. For ever in the first principles,—sinning and repenting,—they never get beyond the plane of their first experience.

Those who do strike for a new discovery, are usually not very long in finding it, and when it is found every want of their souls is met. Redeemed before, they are now endowed ; bought already with a price, and clothed with garments of salvation, they

are now filled with the Spirit—brought into abiding union with Jesus, and, as temples of God, they are filled with the Holy Ghost.

By the first experience we are born into the family of God, and receive the spirit of adoption ; by the second we come to manhood, and enter upon our inheritance as heirs of God.

The deeper experience was realized by the patriarch Job when the Lord manifested Himself to him in the rolling, involving cloud, and doubled over to him all he had ever before possessed and enjoyed. The prophet Isaiah came into it when he was cleansed from sin by the fire from the altar laid on his lips. Patriarch and prophet alike received the baptism of the Spirit (the Rhua), the wind, the fire.

The second grand discovery was symbolized in the Old Testament as distinct from the first, by the Feast of Pentecost, which came after that of the Passover. For as the Passover signified atonement for sin, and immunity from judgment, so the Pentecost represented endowment with resurrection-life and power in Jesus by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

In the New Testament, John the Baptist proclaims the distinction by declaring that he preaches the first experience, and that upon those who come into that, Jesus will also bestow the second.

Jesus emphasizes this proclamation of John by repeating it, and speaking to His disciples as already in the first experience, and soon to come into the second. And He also unfolds at length the nature and benefits of the later and deeper experience, as that in which He bestows the Comforter upon His disciples, to dwell in them for ever, and in which He comes to them Himself with His Father, to abide for ever with them, so to bring them into abiding and full union with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Apostles and their fellow-disciples exemplify

the distinction by the fact that on the day of Pentecost they receive the promised Comforter after having been true disciples of Christ, as recognized by the Saviour Himself, during the years of His presence with them in the body.

Peter and John act upon the fact of this distinction when they go down to Samaria and at once pray for the happy Samaritans already converted under the preaching of Philip, that they may receive the Spirit.

Paul acts upon it when he meets the twelve disciples at Ephesus, and asks them whether they have received the Spirit since they believed.

Apollos further illustrates it by accepting the deeper experience under the teaching of Aquila and Priscilla, after having become already a true Christian, zealous for Christ, eloquent in the gospel, and mighty in the Scriptures.

Many, in our own day, who have been born again and have clearly apprehended their justification by faith, seek and find the later and deeper experience under one or other of various names, such as "Sanctification," "The Rest of Faith," "Perfect Love," and "The Higher Christian Life."

Besides these, there is another class of Christians who come into it without ever having heard of it at all as a distinct experience. Pressed by their great heart-hunger for something more than they have found in their conversion, they go anew to the Lord, give themselves up completely into His hands, and He gives them in fact the Holy Spirit to dwell in them and lead them into all the fulness of God.

What could show more clearly the distinctness of the later experience from the new birth? Taught and exemplified abundantly as distinct in the Scriptures, sought and found under other names by many who have not recognized it under the Scripture name—

baptism of the Holy Ghost—and actually found by those who have not sought it or heard of it so as to conceive of it as a distinct experience, either from the Word of God or the teachings of their fellow Christians ;—if these things do not show it, what could ?

A single instance from the many of the last-named class will sufficiently illustrate the fact stated concerning them :—

THE LOST INEBRIATE SAVED.

He had been a prosperous man, a banker, with a loving and lovely wife and a large circle of reputable friends. Insidiously, the habit of wine drinking had grown into that of a craving appetite for something stronger, and this into an alarming frequency and constancy in the use of intoxicants, until at last it became a cancerous vice, striking its deadly roots into the vitals of his character, prosperity, and prospects. He began to neglect his affairs. He did things that were foolish, yea fearful, for a business man to do. Confidence in him gradually ceased, friends dropped off, business diminished, and finally he was compelled to change his line for one of lower grade.

Meanwhile he became alarmed for himself, and sought to reform. He tried gradualism, and the grade was downward ever into deeper depths. He tried total abstinence by resolutions which snapped in the hour of temptation. He added the force of public sentiment by the public pledge, but respect for his word before men proved as ineffectual as his private resolutions had done. Neither self-respect, or respect for his wife, or for public opinion, could hold him back from intoxication.

One resource remained, and this he felt sure would answer the purpose—the church—religion. His wife was a member of the church, and he made up his

mind to cast in his lot with her and be a true Christian. He took his stand publicly, entered the Sabbath school, talked in prayer meetings, and offered himself as a member of the church ; and was indignant that they did not call a special meeting to receive him. All this while he was using tobacco as a substitute for stronger stimulants, and often hastening home from church or Sabbath school to his pipe. This, of course, could end only in failure, and this time his failure was an awful one. Like the Prodigal, he deliberately took everything he could scrape together, and literally went away into a far country and wasted all in riotous living. With a high hand he kept it up for many weeks, until his money was all gone. At last he came so far to himself as to return deeply humbled to his home.

Before going away he had heard Dr. John Hall, and been impressed with his sincerity, and after his return he again sought his ministry. The Lord so ordered it that the subject of discourse this time was the love of God, and it fell upon the prodigal returned, like the welcoming arms of a father ; his heart was deeply touched and he sought an interview, and said frankly, "I have come to see you about my soul." Dr. Hall said many things true and kind—one thing went home to the depths of his visitor's heart. He asked him if he knew the plan of salvation. The answer was, "Oh yes, I understand it very well." "You know, then, that you need to have imputed to you the righteousness of Christ, do you?" No, sir, I do not ; what does that mean?" The Doctor explained. "The righteousness of Christ?" thought he, "the righteousness of Christ ; no, I have been trying to mend my own ways, so as to make them right in my own eyes and commendable to God. *Oh! I must have the righteousness of Christ.*"

Heartily thanking the Doctor, he went out, sought

his own place, locked himself in, and that very night before he had been long prostrate in the presence of the Lord, he had his eyes opened to see the miserable patch-work of his own righteousness, mended up as best he had been able to do it, as *all and only filthy rags*, while the perfect righteousness of Christ came out before him in its spotless beauty and shining glory as *all his own by simple faith*. Instantly his mourning was turned to joy, and his garments of heaviness to praise.

From that blessed hour he was in a new life, in a new world. His motives were new, his feelings were new, his chains fell off. The old appetite left him ; tobacco, like alcohol, ceased to be a temptation to him. He was a free man, a true man, a true child of God. Yet, although free, he was not full. He was, indeed, at times very joyous ; but then again he was in unrest. From the day of his conversion he gave himself up to earnest and active service as a Christian, but he found the impulsion too often to be only a sense of duty, when it should have been love. He worked faithfully, but longed more and more for a deeper spiritual endowment.

His sense of need grew oppressive. At last he went to Jesus, and gave himself up anew to the Saviour, and laid himself over like an infant in its mother's arms, and there rested. From that hour his soul was satisfied in Jesus. Duty was turned into delight, and service became the joy of his life.

This proved a new era in his heart-history. He still keeps his position as a little child resting in the arms of Jesus, trusting for all things and finding all things in Christ. Before this he fought his own battles, looking to Christ to help him, and was often defeated. Since then he lets Jesus fight for him, and comes off conqueror. Up to that time he had planned work for the Lord, and tried to get the Lord to carry out his

plans. Since then he has let the Lord plan for him, and looked to the Lord for grace to do His own appointed work in His own appointed way. Before that, the Bible was precious, but it was sometimes read as a task. Now, the Living Word so illuminates the written word that it is sweeter than honey. And up to that moment prayer had sometimes been a burden, but since then it has been one of the great and ceaseless pleasures of life.

During the more than thirty months that have since gone by, this beloved brother in Christ has been tried to the utmost, but the Lord has been faithful and has not permitted his faith to give way. In one instance the arch enemy put him to the test in a way no less subtle than cruel. One day in a street car he was seized with dizziness and fell. Fellow passengers lifted him up and sustained him until he so far recovered as to get home. A physician prescribed for him ; the apothecary sent him the medicines prescribed. The package contained two ounces of brandy. Taking it in his hand he went into his closet, and holding up the vial before the Lord he prayed, "O Lord, if it be possible, heal me without my taking this brandy ; if not, then let me die." He was healed without the brandy, and lives to glorify God our Saviour for this deliverance and for all His innumerable mercies.

A number of months after this second experience, he was incidentally brought into association with other Christians who had received the like precious faith, and who understood it and taught it as the privilege of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, for the first time, he came to understand how great and how distinctive was the grace into which he had come.

III.

VERY NIGH THEE.

YES, beloved, very nigh thee it is indeed ! And a very precious thing, indeed, it is that is nigh thee. Let us understand it as clearly as possible.

The Lord freely forgave you all your sins, and accepted you as His own dear child. He did this in a single moment, though you had been hours and days—yea, weeks or months it may be, vainly struggling for it before, and the moment in which He did it was the very moment in which you turned to Him with all your heart, and really believed in Jesus as your Saviour.

This is what we call an experience, and this is what is called in New Testament phraseology, a baptism. The Baptism of Repentance, so styled both by John the Baptist, and by our Lord Himself. We call it, also, the new birth, and conversion.

Since that experience, you have felt in greater or less degree the want of something more. You have longed to have your brightest moments prolonged so as to pour their glow through all the hours and days of your life. The glimpses of the love of God gained by you at times, you have wished to have spread out into the dawn, ever brightening, of a day, in all the hours of which the Sun of Righteousness should shine upon you from on high. The delight you have had in the Word of God, and in prayer, at certain seasons,

and in telling of what Jesus has done for you, and in endeavouring to win others to the like precious experience—these visits of the Lord—you have greatly desired to have become an abiding, unceasing feast of the soul.

Another thing you have found since that happy baptism of repentance and remission of sins. You have found at times, sin, Satan, unbelief, the world, getting the victory over you, and then you have longed, and you do now earnestly desire to gain a conquering position and to be an overcomer through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be no more overcome as you have been, alas, too often in the past.

Still another thing you have found since the love of God was first unfolded to you. The sweet rest of your soul, into which you entered then has often been disturbed by unhallowed passions, and heavy anxieties, and you have longed deeply for an unbroken rest of soul in the Lord. Yet other things might be named, but these will suffice.

Now, beloved, just what you have found since that happy hour of the forgiveness of your sins, others have found also, and what you have so longed for and *not found*, they have desired *and found* by another and deeper experience. Yea, and much more have they found than they had dared to expect, or known to ask for, or think about.

This second and deeper experience it is, that has of late been variously designated by such expressive names as Sanctification, The Rest of Faith, Perfect Love, The Higher Christian Life, and Holiness. And this is precisely what was designated by John the Baptist and Christ, in immediate comparison with the Baptism of Repentance, as the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Both alike, are of God, by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

The first is the work of the Spirit on our spirits ; that work concerning which our Lord bids us not to marvel, saying it is like the power of the wind, which is one of the beautiful symbols of the Holy Spirit, " which bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth ; so is every one who is born of the Spirit."

The second is the incoming of the Spirit in abiding fulness, to impart His gifts, bring forth His fruits, unfold the things of Christ unto us, manifest to us the Father and the Son, lead us into all truth, keep us in the peace of God, give us the rest of faith, the Sabbath of the soul, make us conquerors and more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us, purify us unto Himself a peculiar people, and enable us to live in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life.

These two experiences, as we call them, baptisms as they are called in the New Testament, should be distinguished from that which precedes them, and that which follows them, if we would fully understand this great matter.

There comes before the Baptism of Repentance, and must come, the convincing work of the Spirit, for no one would ever turn from the idolized world, and from a life of self-gratification to the Lord, unless deeply and truly convinced both of the necessity for it, and of the righteousness of it, and that by some power equal to the work of unfolding our relations and obligations to God, as only the Spirit of God can do.

After that experience, when we drift away from the Lord through an evil heart of unbelief, and fall into sin, comes another work of the Spirit, that of drawing us back to Christ, and renewing us in repentance and in the sense of sins forgiven. And this may come

many times, oh, so many times, that one is surprised at the unwearied patience of the Lord with us, and at the boundless, endless grace of His forgiving love. In like manner, before the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, there is a convincing work of the Spirit upon us, leading us to see our necessity for a deeper experience, together with the fact that there is such an experience for us. And this convincing work has to be deep and thorough, to bring some of us out of our old ruts of theology and philosophy, and out of our self-will, and out of our fear of losing caste in the church—or of losing place, even—especially if we happen to be under salary as pastors, or in other responsible positions in the church or church enterprises, or happen to have much of the honour which comes from men.

And, after the second experience, the Spirit dwelling in us has a great work to do, in which there may be many special stages, which may be called refreshings, renewings, girdings, or fillings. Such an one the Apostles and their fellow disciples had after the first trial of Peter and John, when they prayed, and the place where they were was shaken, and all were filled with the Holy Ghost anew. Then were they strengthened with might in the inner man, by the Spirit already dwelling in them, and enabled to comprehend the length and breadth, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and were filled with all the fulness of God.

A similar refreshing no doubt followed the Ananias and Sapphira tragedy, and also the remarkable delivery of Peter from prison, and the wonderful manner in which Peter's Judaism was overcome by the vision on the housetop, and the preaching of Christ by him to the gentiles of Cornelius the centurion's household and circle; and the manner in which

Paul and Barnabas were sent forth on a mission to the gentile world, and the work of that night in Philippi, when Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in the dungeon, and were released by an earthquake, and were instrumental in saving both the lives and the souls of the jailer and his household, and many and many another scene recorded in the Acts and Epistles.

None of these after-works of the indwelling Spirit should be confounded with the experience called the Baptism of the Spirit. Just as well might one call each anniversary of his wedding day a wedding, or each grand improvement of his estate, after he has come into his inheritance, an entrance upon the possession of his fortune. As we have one birth into the world, only one, though there may be many stages of growth, and some recoveries to health, possibly, from the border of the grave, so there is one birth into the kingdom, only one, however many may be the after advances in the divine life, or recoveries from relapses into the world.

And as there is one coming of age and entrance upon heirship, only one, whatever may follow after it, so there is one, only one Baptism of the Holy Ghost, though there may be many and very great and precious renewals or refreshings by the Spirit afterwards.

Beloved, this second experience, great and blessed as it is, is very nigh thee. A glance at the facts will serve to show how it stands.

The first great example clearly and definitely given, is that of the Apostles and disciples in the upper chamber on the day of Pentecost. Some of them, as their association with John the Baptist goes to show, must have received the Baptism of Repentance under John's ministry, more than three years before they received the Baptism of the Spirit. Others were con-

verts under the ministry of Christ himself, and some of them, no doubt, had then been but recently brought to repentance. All, however, received the Baptism of the Spirit in the same hour. There was not a single exception.

Amongst the joyous ones in Samaria, who accepted the Gospel at the lips of Philip, may have been some who had been converted at the time the woman of Sycar was won by the Saviour at the Well of Jacob to believe in Him as the Messiah, and were renewed in their faith by the preaching of Philip ; and others, no doubt, who had just then believed for the first time, and were mere children in the faith.

Yet here again, all,—and all alike, it would seem, —were prayed for by Peter and John, when they went down to Samaria, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and all alike they did receive Him.

So nigh was He to them that the moment they really believed in the Lord Jesus as the Giver of the Holy Spirit, and in the Holy Spirit as the Gift of God unto them, to abide in them, they received Him, every one of them,—those just born into the kingdom and those long before converted, the strong and the weak all alike.

Just the same nearness is observable in the instance of Apollos, who had only to be instructed more perfectly in the way, as he was by Aquila and Priscilla, and immediately he entered into the deeper experience. The same was true of the twelve found by St. Paul at Ephesus.

In every instance on record, without any reference to the length of time that had transpired after the first experience, the second was received immediately when there was willingness and faith for its acceptance.

The case of the three thousand who gladly received the word on the day of Pentecost, stands alone, and

is very instructive in one respect, if not in others also. It is too evident for question, from the fruits which follow immediately in the record, that they did receive the gift of the Holy Ghost on the same day that they were baptized for the remission of sin. There were in their case two unusual things. First, there was before them in vivid display this wonderful experience in the case of the one hundred and twenty men and women who had that day received the gift of the Holy Ghost in the upper chamber, and who were so filled as to appear fairly intoxicated with this new wine of the kingdom. By this example they were impressed with the reality of the experience beyond measure. And then Peter, in answering their eager inquiry as to what they must do—do to obtain this wonderful gift, as well as to receive remission of their sins,—told them first to repent and be baptized for the remission of sin, and that then they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise was unto them and to their children, and to all, even as many as the Lord our God should call. They obeyed and believed, and received the two baptisms the same day.

As an illustration of the way in which this was done listen to the story, as told by himself, of

A LONG ISLAND FARMER.

One day, in a union convention for the Higher Christian Life, a plain but fine-looking man arose and gave an account of his experience. He said : "I have been listenin' to you all until I *must* speak. Maybe my experience won't tally with yours, but I must tell it. The other night, down in our place in a meetin', I told 'em I must tell my experience ; that I had an experience I wasn't ashamed to tell ; that if the Lord hadn't give me an experience I needn't be ashamed of, I wouldn't tell it. But as the Apostle Paul said to

the Romans, I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation. Yes, my brethren, it is the power of God unto salvation to a pretty hard one in me, I can tell you.

" I was religious before I had religion, if you know what that means. Years ago I went forward and took my stand in the church, and went to meetin', and took the communion, but I hadn't salvation. All my religion was just my own doin's, and it was poor enough, you may know very well.

" At last I heard some people talk, and sing, and pray, who had something that I hadn't got, and I knew it ; so I got very uneasy. Worse and worse it come on me, and I couldn't shake it off, all I could do. It got so bad at last I couldn't sleep o' nights nor rest o' daytimes. I didn't know what was the matter of me. Finally I broke down, asked the brethren and sisters to pray for me, and begun to cry for mercy myself.

" It wasn't long before I give myself up to the Lord, to be His for ever. It was in my stack yard, there among the stacks. And then He spoke peace to my poor troubled soul, and I knew my sins were all forgivin'. Oh, I knew it in a minute ; I knew it as well as I know I am here, and for a little, oh, I was so happy ! Jesus did seem so wonderful lovely to me. I got up and started to go into the house and tell my wife. But then, just afore I got out of the stack yard, something come to me like a voice in my heart, just as plain, it was, as if somebody had spoken it right out loud, and it said to me : ' You want something more,' and I said, ' Do I, Lord ? ' Then, dear Lord, do give it to me ; ' and I went back and got down there before Him again, and He did give it to me right there. I don't know what to call it, but He just filled me full with the fulness of God. He just come in and took possession of me. Why, I just give up to Him then

myself, and my wife, and my children, and horses, and waggons, and ploughs, and everything, and I hain't ever took 'em back again, either. And He hain't never left me a single day, no, not for an hour, since that me. Afore that I loved money pretty well,—a little too well,—and I have more now than I had then, too, and yet I don't love it at all as I did then. It ain't fine. It is all the Lord's, and I love to use it for Him. My horses and waggon, too, they are the Lord's, and I love to use 'em for Him. If a poor widow needs a load hauled, I like to go and haul it for her. If my neighbour wants a garden ploughed, and he hain't got a team, I just delight to do it for him, and not charge a cent for it, either. Once I meant to build me a fine house, but now I can't afford it, cause if I lived in a fine house I couldn't go to camp-meetin's and leave it, for fear it would get burnt or robbed. And then I couldn't do so much for the Lord's work, either, as I can now. I can serve the Lord better in the old house, and so I like to live in it, and don't want no new, fine one.

“ When I go to market now, the Lord He goes with me all the way, and I don't want to stop at them drinkin' places on the road, as I used to. I don't have to stop to light my pipe, either, for I give it up at once when the Lord filled me with Himself; for I felt that the Lord must have a clean temple to dwell in, and not one all filthy with the filthy weed. And I hain't never had one bit o' desire to touch either rum or tobacco from then till now. And I do love the Lord and His people, no matter what name they call themselves by. I do love them, oh, I can't tell you how I do love them.

“ Now I don't know what you'll think of my experience. Maybe it ain't like yours, but the Lord, He does satisfy my soul completely, and I want everybody to know Him, and I tell everybody about Him and

what He has done for me. And He does bless it, for down in our place a good many are turning to the Lord, and we are having good times there. Blessed be His holy name. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!"

All who heard this farmer, took note of him, that, though unlearned, he had been with Jesus, and his story was abundantly confirmed by his neighbours. Evidently, he had received the Spirit immediately after having the evidence of forgiveness. The two experiences were received by him in the same hour, there in his stack yard, as in the instance of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, in the Temple.

Yes, beloved, it is very nigh thee. Believest thou not? I know thou believest. The Lord bless thee, and lead thee to give all up to Him as the farmer did, and to accept all in Him, as he did, and to have Him abiding in you and filling you evermore with the fulness of God. Amen.

IV.

EXCELLENCY OF THE POWER OF GOD.

YES, and in God. In us only as God Himself is in us, and attending us only as God Himself is with us. To be in the power of the Spirit, is to have the Spirit in His power with and within us. Beloved, how think ye of the Spirit? Do you think of Him as a force or a being? As an influence or a person? As an impartation from God, or as God's gift of Himself to us?

How think ye of the baptism of the Spirit? As an influence from God poured forth upon man? Or as God Himself given unto and received by man to dwell in person in him for ever?

Your speech will tell. The question is not what is your theory or theology of the Spirit, but what is your practical faith. You may theoretically or theologically hold to the personality, and so to the indivisibility of the Spirit, and yet practically believe in Him as you do in the impersonal forces of nature—heat, light, or electricity,—which may be parted and imparted in measure little or much, and received in quantity great or small.

If the walls of your place of prayer should be questioned as to their echoes of your own words designating the Spirit and His works, what would they answer? Would they tell of your habitual prayers for Him, or for *it*? For His presence, or *its* influence? The

difference is immense. Between the two there is a great gulf, passable only by the bridge of the actual experimental reception of the Spirit as a person, and that person God, to dwell in a person, and that person yourself.

Our blessed Saviour never once spoke of the Spirit in impersonal, but always in personal terms. He did, indeed, compare Him to a living fountain—a fountain of life in the believer, from whom should issue rivers of living water,—but this spake He of the Spirit as a person, not as an influence, because, so says the record, *He*, not *it*, was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. But always and everywhere our Lord used the personal terms *He*, *Him*, *His*, *Whom*, *Whose*, and not the impersonal forms *it*, *its*, and *which*, of the Spirit.

As a person Himself, our Saviour also Himself received the Spirit as a person to dwell in Him for ever, and when He received the Spirit He gave Himself up to Him, to be led by Him whithersoever the Father would lead Him by the Spirit; and by Him He also spoke all His words and wrought all His works in the will of the Father. After the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, He prayed, and the heavens opened and the Spirit came down upon Him in dove-like form and abode upon Him, then led Him up into the wilderness to be tested by Satan, and when the devil had been foiled and had given up his efforts for the time, Jesus returned *in the power* of the Spirit,—that is, having the Spirit in Him in undiminished, unhindered, unrestricted power,—into Galilee.

The Apostle Peter, speaking of Jesus to Cornelius and his company, said of Him that God anointed—baptized—Him, with the Holy Ghost, and that He went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. The power that was in Him and with Him was the Holy

ghost Himself, leading Him, speaking through Him, and working by Him.

The Apostles in like manner received the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost,—or the *gift* of the Spirit, as Peter describes the wonderful boon,—that is, the Spirit given from the Father by the Son to them. And they never once fell into the mistake of speaking of Him in the impersonal forms, or praying for Him as absent from them, or as divisible and to be shed forth upon them by measure as an impersonal power or influence from God, but always recognized Him as in them in person and in power, and as proffered to all believers to dwell in them in like manner.

Beloved, would not the same distinct apprehension of the Holy Spirit as a person, and the same reception of Him by faith as given unto you from the Father by the Son, and the same recognition of Him as dwelling in you as a person in the fulness of the power of the Godhead to drive out all His enemies and yours, sanctify you to God, fill you with the fulness of God, lead you into all the truth of God, guide you in all the will of God, speak by you all the words of God, and work in you and by you all the works of God? Would not this free you from all obscurities and mists of doubt and obscurity? Would it not be glorious, if true? Would it not be true and real to you, if accepted by faith? Try it and see.

This is the power,—not a power abstract from God bestowed upon us of which we can speak in impersonal terms as it, its, and which,—but the power of God Himself given unto us in God's gift of Himself to us, and dwelling in us and with us in the person of God Himself in spirit and in truth in the fulness of His own power.

The excellency of the power is just in this, that it is in God Himself in us and with us. In this it excels

all other powers, as God Himself excels all other beings. His power is limited in exercise only by His own will, and if He be in us and we be in His will, His power is all ours for whatever works He gives us to do. His power in us and our power in Him is absolutely unlimited for anything and everything under His leadership.

The power of the Spirit in us and with us, excels every other imaginable power in perfection of adaptation to us. He suits us completely. No other conceivable power could so meet the inmost and the utmost wants of our being.

Much is said of the power of the human will, and there can come no good from belittling it. Exercised in obedience to the will of God, it is one of the grand, and glorious, and beneficent powers of our wonderful nature. Yet even in our earthly relations and in our own interior being, that which is most vital to peace and happiness does not obey our own will at all. The innermost part of our being we call the heart, out of which, the Lord tells us, are the issues of life ; and this heart is not under the direct power of our own will, but it is under the direct and complete control of the Spirit when we give ourselves up to Christ and He comes in to dwell in us.

In our bodies we have muscles which are controlled by our will, and we have other muscles which are not at all subject to our will. Our hands and feet, our tongues, and all the members of our bodies which move or rest as we choose, obey the mandates of the will, but our hearts beat on or stop beating, not at our bidding, but whether we will or not. The very vital centre of our own bodily organism, out of which literally are all the arterial issues of physical life, is not at all under the direct control of our own will. God made it for His own control. We may say to our hearts "beat on," when they are growing faint in

their action, or "cease your violence," when they are rising to feverish excitement, but will they obey us? Yet when God says beat on or stop, they instantly obey.

Just so is it with the heart of our spiritual organism. It was made to be God's own seat. Enthroned in the heart, God by His Spirit sweetly controls,—nay, pours His own life, and love, and peace, and power through all the life-currents of our existence. He fills the soul with Himself. He says, Let there be light, and there is light. He breathes His own love in and through it, and it is filled with love. He speaks peace, and there is a great calm. He makes His own rest in the soul, and the soul enters into God's own rest. He unfolds the things of His own kingdom to the soul, and the kingdom of God reigns within. He works in the soul according to His own pleasure, and the power of God is in the willing and in the doing according to God's will.

We ourselves, in the fullest strength of our own will stimulated to the utmost by the law of God, find it true that to will is present with us, but how to do we find not. But when, through faith in Jesus the bestower, we receive the Holy Spirit to abide in us, and commit to Him the work of working in us to will and to do, then we find it as easy to do as to will, because all the power of God is in both the willing and the doing.

He fits us perfectly. He made us for Himself to dwell in. Our bodies are as perfectly suited to God for His habitation as they are to us to be the tenement of our souls.

Moreover, as instruments for God's work, we suit Him to all intents and purposes if we are given up to Him for His use in everything. He can speak by us as He spake by holy men of old. He can write by us, print by us, preach by us, teach by us, give by us,

do anything and everything by us. It suited our dear Lord just as well to raise *Æneas* up by the power of the Spirit at the word of Peter, when he said, “*Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole,*” as it did by the same power to raise up the poor man at the pool of Siloam, when He did it in person by His own word at His own lips, saying to him, “*Rise, take up thy bed and walk.*”

It suits Him now to work by us as He did by Himself when He was here in the body, any work, however great or small it may be; and if we have faith in Him He will work by us any work that He would Himself do if here in the body, because the power is the same power in either case—the power of the Spirit.

Beloved, is this too great a boon to accept? It is not too great for God to give. Why should God's gift of Himself in Spirit and in reality to us to dwell in us, be thought a thing incredible? It is just the complement—the completion—of what He has done and you have accepted already. He has given His Son for you and to you as your atoning, forgiving, justifying Saviour, and you have accepted Him. Yet complete as is this gift of God Himself in the person of His Son for you, and completely as you believe yourself to be justified in Him as the Lord your Righteousness, you find yourself incomplete in sanctification to God, and all your groanings over your unsanctified nature, and all your endeavours and prayers for sanctification, do not bring it or produce it in completeness; they do not set you apart permanently and fully to God; they fail to free you from the dominion of your sins.

Now, why should it be thought a thing incredible that God, who has given Himself in the person of His Son; that Christ, who has given Himself in His own person to die for you and redeem you to Him-

should take you to Himself and give Himself to in the person of His Spirit, to dwell in you andify you,—set you apart wholly to Himself and Himself, and dwell in you for ever?

I well think it incredible that a man who had ned a house in all things to suit himself, bought he materials with his own money and built the e for his own occupancy, should not be willing come into it, and occupy it, and hold it, and use it itself when it was done.

The incoming of God by His Spirit into you, and indwelling in you in all the fulness of His tri-nality,—power, love, light, peace and joy,—is the completion of what He has already done for and given to you. It is the possession-taking permanent occupancy of the purchased and red habitation of His own choice for Himself. consent only is needed to the completion of purpose, and of your completeness in Him. Be-l, will you, do you believe? Do you consent?

V.

INFIRMITIES.

IS there any remedy in this life for our constitutional infirmities and habitual weaknesses? Yes, a perfect remedy and a glorious one, glorious for us and glorifying to God. Turn them over to Jesus for cure. Nay rather commit yourself, infirmities, weaknesses and all, just as you are, to Him, and see what He will do with you and with them. Our blessed Lord has a way of turning our very weaknesses to account for His own glory, and for our good. Our weakness gives opportunity for His strength, and in our weakness His strength is made perfect.

In the days of the bodily presence of Jesus among men, the bodily infirmities of those amongst whom He lived, brought by their cure a revenue of glory to God, which else had never been seen. So now in the days of His spiritual presence amongst us, our spiritual infirmities, through His perfect mastery of them, bring glory to Him, which all the natural amabilities of disposition and equabilities of temper and native freedom from great weaknesses never could do.

When Jesus, in passing out of the temple where His life was threatened, found by the wayside a man that was born blind, and was asked by his disciples, Who did sin, this man or his parents that he was born blind? He answered, "Neither, but that the works of God might be manifested in him. I must work the works

of God while it is day." Then He healed the man and let him go, and the healed man was a life-long miracle of glory to God. Side by side there has come down to us through the ages two things, glory to God through this man's blindness healed, and shame to the men in the temple whose sight was good, but who drove the Lord of glory out of his own temple that same day by threatening to put Him to death. Yes, and glory to God will go down through the eternities from the healing of that one man more than from the perfect sight of the ninety and nine in the temple who needed no healing.

When a man of violent temper is made meek by committing himself to Jesus and having the strength of Christ made perfect in his weakness, it brings a ceaseless revenue of glory to God which all the equable tempers in the world could not do.

More marvellous still is the other side of this thing. How shall it be stated? The principle is given by the Apostle Paul in saying, When I am weak, then am I strong. Yes, and so he was, and so is every one who in his weakness commits himself for deliverance and keeping to Christ. Equally true also was it of Paul, and is it of every one else fully given up to the Lord, *where I am weak there am I strong.*

Moses was a servant of God, born and bred to be, and taught that he was to become, the deliverer of the Lord's people, yet his spirit must have been any thing but meek. If we may believe the tradition concerning him, he was a man of blood, a warrior, a hero. As captain of the Egyptian hosts he had overthrown the Ethiopians and liberated Egypt before he in his own will and way undertook the liberation of Israel. Whether this tradition is true or not, his natural and habitual violence is seen in his first attempt at the rescue of his people in the killing of the Egyptian who strove with the Israelite. Yet this Moses became

the proverb of meekness for all ages : *where* he was weak *there* he became strong.

Saul of Tarsus—the very mention of the name starts forth to the view the bitterness and fierceness of the man *breathing out* threatenings and slaughter—*exceeding mad* against the followers of the Meek and Lowly One. Yet who so meek and gentle as he when committed to Christ, so that he could say, The life I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God. I live, nevertheless, not I, but Christ liveth in me.

Simon Peter exemplifies the same thing even more palpably. Simon Peter's weakness was of another sort, —impulsiveness. Moses and Saul were *fierce* for the right as they conceived it. Peter was carried away by impulse, right or wrong. Impulsiveness appears very strong but is really very weak, roars like a lion when the enemy is in the distance—but runs away like a hind when he approaches. Peter's boasting was not put on, but felt. He really felt that though all besides him should forsake Christ, yet he would stand firm—would die with Him. So again he really felt all the fear he showed when he cowered before the accusing maid, and denied that he knew Jesus, and confirmed his denial with oaths and imprecations. He was impulsive, and impulsive people, though strong in expression, are weak as water, driven this way or the contrary way, by every wind.

But now mark the transformation. Where Peter was weak before he received his second baptism, there, from the moment he received it, he was strong. He was the first to rise up before the Jerusalem populace who had put Christ to death, and for fear of whom he had so quailed, and to tell them boldly that they had killed the Prince of Life. The fearless one also he was before the grand court of his nation, and when charged not to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus, and threatened with death if he should, he could

answer their threatenings, by saying, Whether it be right to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things we do know, and testify the things we have seen.

The glory of Christ as our Redeemer is, that His blood atones perfectly *for our sins*; and His glory as our Saviour is, that He saves us perfectly *from our sins* in spite of every infirmity of body or spirit, of constitution or habit. And the crowning glory of the whole is, that in the very point where we are weakest, by nature or habit, there we are strongest through grace. The greater the weakness the more perfectly we lean on Jesus, and the more perfectly His strength avails us.

It is the old, old story over again. Those in the days of his flesh, who had spent all their living on the doctors and were nothing better but worse for it all, and who had no other hope; came to Jesus and were perfectly healed, while those who were not half so badly diseased and had good hopes of slow recovery by their own remedies or by the skill of physicians, or at least of being saved from dying, stayed away from Christ and lived on in their diseased condition, or died from its effects. The worst were made the best, and the best became the worst.

Those who become so weary of their infirmities,—temper, pride, vanity, avarice, lust, whatever else,—and so despairing of every other way as to fly to Christ and give themselves over into His hands for deliverance and keeping, find the remedy perfect, glorious. Those who stay away from Christ, or look to Him only to help them—that is, look to Him to whom the whole work of saving belongs, to help *them* do *His* work—go on to the bitter end unsaved.

A HOUSEKEEPER

was sadly troubled with the infirmity of a hasty temper.

Long habit confirmed her in the second nature of sharp words. She was a good woman, a good Christian as the term goes, but though she would rather have lost her right hand, or her head, than have given up her Saviour, yet her weakness was too strong for her. All her good resolutions were put to flight in a moment by any one of the every-day crosses of the housekeeper's life.

This woman had learned her weakness, and would have given all the world to be free from it, but saw no hope of it until death.

At last, however, she heard of a convention for higher life, and went to it. Jesus, a Saviour from sin, was the theme. Many testimonies were given to the fact that Jesus does save from their sins all who put their trust in Him. Hope that she might be saved sprang up in her heart. She pondered the matter. In her kitchen, engaged about her work, she turned it over and over in her mind. The question came up in this form, "Such a hasty temper as mine so long indulged, how can it ever be overcome? If I could only have time to think when a provocation comes, I might look to Jesus and He would save me, but before I have time to think, my temper is up and my tongue loose. If there was only some way of thinking beforehand—but stay—that Jesus can do for me if He is in me. Yes, the dear Jesus is quicker than even my quick temper, and He can be beforehand with that and with the tempter too. Yes, that is it. Why—how is it I never saw this before? Yes, Jesus can keep me." So she began rejoicing in Jesus as able to keep her blameless in all times of provocation. And it was a great joy to her.

Afterwards she became somewhat perplexed with the question of giving all up for Jesus, and how she should know when she had come to the end of it and had given up the last thing. Then came to her

the grand truth that it was only to give *herself* up, and all was given up, and this she could do and did do with delight.

So given up, and so trusting in Jesus, she found herself perpetually and entirely the Lord's, and proved by happy and continual experience His keeping power. He was always quicker than the tempter and the tempter.

It was not this woman, but another who had come to the same position of faith in Jesus, who shortly after was put to the test in a way that brought glory to God in her soul, and from her tongue, in a very unexpected moment and way. She was in her kitchen making preserves. On her stove was a kettle full and boiling. In her hand she held a glass jar-full just done. Seeing the kettle about to boil over, she turned quickly to put down the jar in her hand, and broke it, and away went the preserves mingled with broken glass all over everything. For the first time in her life, under such circumstances, a great calm pervaded her soul, and instead of the usual exclamations of angry vexation, she cried out in the joy of her heart, Glory to God.

An extreme example, all the stronger for the strength of the infirmity before it was turned over to Jesus for cure, and for the perfection of the cure when committed to Him, is that of

A PUGILIST SAVED.

He is now one of the truest, noblest Christian workers in the world. He was the belt winner and wearer in his native town. Up to his ninth year he was not an unamiable boy. At nine his father gave him to the boy's uncle, a pugilist, who put him at once in training for the ring. At sixteen he won the

belt. Before he was seventeen the Lord had arrested and converted him. He was a wonder to many. His fellow pugilists coveted him, and were not going to give him up if they could help it. They conspired for his fall. With the subtlety of the serpent, and his venom, too, they put forward one of their number to insult him in the street in presence of many. The device was successful; the insult came, and in a moment the insulter was stretched upon the ground under a heavy blow from the insulted one. The moment the blow was struck, the heart of him who gave it smote him more heavily than his hand had smitten his fellow. He instantly withdrew to weep, and lament, and repent in secret. Afterwards he confessed and humbled himself in public, and felt restored. And oh, how he resolved to watch and pray!

Another trap was set by the conspirators, and another one of their number was felled to the ground. Then followed shame, repentance, confession, restoration again, and a resolution this time to look instantly to Jesus if another provocation should come. Still a third, then a fourth, and finally a fifth re-enactment of the same thing occurred. Poor fellow! He tried everything he could think of—faith and prayer as well as resolutions and vows. His faith, however, had this subtle mistake about it, that he trusted to his own quickness of thought in looking to Jesus before the impulse to strike should be carried out. But, alas! he found his thoughts and his look came too late. Finally, in despair of everything else, he gave himself up to Jesus as he was, in utter helplessness, for keeping, and has been perfectly kept from that moment. The conspirators egged him, and even stoned him, in the street, but the only and the instant feeling toward them in his heart was that of pity and compassion. A singular and wonderful meekness pervades his spirit, and though he has the physique of the pugilist and a

sledge-hammer fist, the gentleness of Christ is seen in all his looks, and the tenderness of a woman in the touch of his hand and tones of his voice.

Well may we, then, with St. Paul, rather glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us, and the glory of God be seen in the victory over us that He gains.

VI.

IN EVERY-DAY LIFE.

A BIDING union with Jesus hallows all things. It is everywhere precious. Nowhere is it more blessed than in every-day life. Jesus makes our earthly cares more than a heavenly discipline. He transmutes them into a present heavenly service. We sing in our sweet Sabbath morning hymn—

“ From all our worldly cares set free,
May we rest this day in Thee.”

But in *abiding* union with Jesus there is freedom and rest sweet as heaven *in*, not *from*, all our so-called earthly cares, because in all we are serving our loving Saviour as truly, and pleasing Him as fully, as when engaged in the prayer and praise of the Christian assembly, or in the labour of love in the Sabbath school, or in the precious communion of the closet. The whole of life in all its relations, and in every calling and transaction, becomes a sweet Sabbath keeping, a constant rest, a ceaseless incense, a joyous offering, a living sacrifice, an endless walk with God, a patient race in companionship with Jesus, a life-long overcoming position in Christ, a present joint heirship with him in God.

The very first step, the threshold of the abiding, brings one to the position to have this transformation

of every-day life made complete, if there be no drawing back from it, and if it be clearly and intelligently entered upon. An example will best show this.

A CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN,

in the following letters, shows clearly the difference between the fitful, divided life he has hitherto been leading, and the united abiding life into which he has now come. But the chief thing in his statement, of interest for us in this connection, is the light it flings upon the way in which entrance into the abiding prepares one to make earthly cares a heavenly service. Immediately after coming consciously into full union with Jesus he wrote one of his friends :

“ My dear Brother in Jesus :

“ He has made me make a full consecration of myself to Himself, and His infinite love has made me a new man. I cannot keep my eyes from tears, nor my lips from glorifying Him. This poor body of mine has become the temple of the Holy Ghost. From henceforth ‘ for me to live is Christ, to die gain.’ In Jesus, yours, _____.”

At or about the same time he wrote to another friend, as follows :

“ Glory ! Glory ! My dear, dear U—,

“ We are now one for ever in the Lord. Jesus has so sweetly taken possession of me, and I have given up myself completely to Him. I am saved with an everlasting salvation. Sin shall have no more dominion over me. Oh the sweet love of Jesus !

*“ The Book is ILLUMINATED now, and my first lesson when I opened it, to my *open* eyes, was :—‘ If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. If ye love Me keep My commandments, and I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever ; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him ; but ye know Him ; for He dwelleth *with* you and shall be *in* you. I will not leave you comfortless ; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more ; but ye see Me ; because I live ye shall live also.*

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. (John xiv. 14—20.) How easy it is to give up *everything* for Him! Now I am going to let Him use me, and work through me. Pray that I may have an ever-increasing joy and love, and that the victory over self be for ever complete. One in our dear Lord. — — —

The point at which these letters touch every-day life is that of the willing consecration of *everything* in life to Jesus, which Jesus Himself had wrought in the heart of His servant. His life before had been a divided one. The every-day sphere was separated from the religious sphere of his life. His home and business life, except in so far as it embraced the stated worship at the household altar, the hours of religious study, the moments of secret devotion, and occasional Christian intercourse by the way, was for himself and for his wife and children. His religious life was for Christ, with this large discount, however, from even the partial or divided fealty to the Lord, that self intruded into it all. But now, all in both spheres was given up to the Lord, his home and business life, as well as his religious life.

The position into which this entire consecration brought him, in relation to home and business life, is shown beautifully in a flash, in the following letter written afterwards :

“ My dear Brother in Jesus :

“ Since He so sweetly made me give up everything for Him, I have been continually rejoicing. I love Him with all my heart,—incomparably beyond all else; and yet, strange to say, I love my wife, children, friends, with a far fuller love than before,—hate no one in the world. All anxiety too about my dear children has gone. As I look upon them, tears of joy fill my eyes.

“ The dear Lord is my beloved friend. I can trust Him. Each morning as I dress, I wash more carefully what was a wretched body, but is now, though unchanged in itself, the temple of the Holy Ghost. I have no anxiety about my sins, because He is within me and fights off every temptation. ‘ To me to

live is Christ.' Oh how wonderful it is! 'As Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us.' You and I, and our dear wives, will for ever sing—

'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!'

— — —

. In the other letter the point was that of the new consecration, embracing everything, in every-day life as well as in religious life. In this, the point is the new position for every-day life, into which this new consecration brought him. The facts in this new position are all the more vividly, because undesignedly, indicated.

1. A new and *sacred love* of all things precious in the every-day life.

2. A new and sacred sense that *in the care* of all these things, given up by him to the Lord, and re-committed by the Lord to him, he was serving and pleasing the Lord.

3. A new, and sweet and full *confidence* that all he had given up to the Lord, and now held as the Lord's, would be securely kept and tenderly cared for by the Lord Himself.

Taken together they make this one great precious reality: that he had now come to accept all things in every-day life as part and parcel of his sacred partnership with Christ, and in them all saw Christ and loved Him and served Him just as truly as in his religious life.

Oh how significant the words—what newness of home and social life they indicate: "Strange to say, I love my wife, children, friends, with a far fuller love than before."

And if possible, yet more so the words: "Each morning, as I dress, I wash more carefully what was a wretched body, but is now the temple of the Holy Ghost." How these expressions let the new light of Christ in his soul shine out! How they flash forth

the new and sacred love and care he felt for what before had little or no sacredness about it, but now had become so wonderfully and sweetly sacred, because it all belonged to Jesus ! Oh how precious now were the daily cares of his home life ! And how delightful the knowledge that in them all he was serving and pleasing his loving Lord !

The new and wonderful confidence in the Lord, which filled his heart with peace and joy and hope, in regard to the loved ones of his home, is shown in the words, " All anxiety, too, about my children has gone. As I look upon them, tears of joy fill my eyes." Oh how expressive ! One can see him standing amidst his little flock, with his new and strange love, care, and confidence welling up in his heart, glistening in his tears, shining in his illuminated face, in emotions of inexpressible tenderness and delight, because now all are the Lord's, and are his to care for in the Lord, and yet the Lord's, most tenderly cared for by Him. No wonder his cheeks are bedewed ! No wonder his heart swells with unutterable things. No wonder his face shines ! One can see him too, though of this he does not speak, going forth to his affairs in the same spirit, transacting business as in the Lord, for the Lord, to the Lord, led by the Spirit of the Lord.

All summed up in one it is this,—the hitherto divided life of this dear child of God has now become a unit. His every-day life and his religious life have been married, and become one and inseparable. The every-day life has exchanged the name Secular for Sacred, and has become Sacred as truly as any bride becomes one with her husband. And over all his life there has come a cloud of glory, a transfiguring power, which makes it to shine and glisten with a heavenly radiance, and thus his earthly cares have become a heavenly service.

Now mark this one thing, beloved, as here illustrated ; it was with a heart *made willing by the power of the Holy Ghost*, in response to faith in Christ, that this man gave everything up for Christ. Wherefore his example says to you *trust in Jesus*, and *look to Him* to make you willing in like manner. If you do, it will surely be according to your faith.

Yes, and mark, too, this other thing. When you do look to Jesus, and He does make you willing by the power of the Holy Ghost, and you do give up everything to Him, He will keep from you the vile things you gave up to Him, and them only ; and will give back to you every precious thing infinitely enhanced in preciousness, by your sweet partnership in them all, with your loving Saviour.

Thus much for the *position* into which this consecration of everything in life—that is of one's self in everything to Christ—brings the consecrated one. Now for the marvellous benefits of this position. What are they ?

A whole chapter or book might be devoted to unfolding them—a few lines must suffice, and these shall be given to a single example.

A CRISIS IN THE LIFE OF A BOOK-KEEPER.

One evening a young man called. He was agreeable in manners, good looking, well dressed, and there was an air of sadness in look and tone which took hold upon my sympathies. His story was told with beautiful frankness. It was this : he was head book-keeper in a large commercial house, and had the confidence alike of employers and subordinates, but was overworked, losing health, his relish for business gone ; he made mistakes, found it hard to detect and correct them, was in danger of losing the respect of employers and helpers, feared he was losing his

memory, was even afraid his brain was softening, had to ask an extension of vacation for rest last summer, and feared he would have to request a still greater extension this summer, or give up his position entirely.

Altogether his case seemed one for a physician rather than for me, but I looked up, and light came.

"You are a Christian, of course?"

"Yes."

"Consecrated?"

"Yes: as far as I know."

"In active work?"

"Yes; and I love it dearly. If I could only find some situation in which I could serve God all the time, I think I might come out all right."

"Well, can you not?"

"No; I have tried, but in vain."

"But you can."

"Where, pray?"

"Just where you are."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. Give yourself up to serve God just where you are,

'Tis He appoints our daily lot,
And He does all things well.'

Accept your present position as from Him and for Him. Accept the fact that He will be as well pleased with faith-service in your counting-room as in your prayer or Sunday-school room. Accept, also, the fact that He will give you the Holy Spirit to dwell in you, quicken you, strengthen you, and guide you in posting books, making balance sheets, footing up columns of figures, and correcting mistakes, just as freely and fully as in praying and speaking, if you do it in faith. He is no respecter of places, any more than of persons, and gives wisdom and strength to all who trust

Him and serve Him, in whatever vocation or work
He calls them to undertake."

The young man heartily accepted the fact. The Lord wrote the truth in his heart, and he went to his lodgings joyous in the Lord.

Shortly afterwards came a letter from him, saying in substance :

"I am a new man. My counting-room is a new world.

'Jesus, all the day long, is my joy and my song.'"

VII.

PRECIOUS IN ALL THINGS.

A NEW settler in the deep, deep forest of Indiana twenty-five years ago, became troubled about his salvation. He was ploughing to plant a new field. The trees had been cut down and burned up, but their stumps and roots remained. The field was much like many a heart,—sins forgiven, and soil opened to the good seed, but stumps and roots still there. His plough every now and then struck a root, just where it was unlooked for, and provoked him. His horses though not vicious, had spirit enough to catch the temper of their master. The plough, too, seemed to be of the same mind with its owner; so also did the harness and everything. The plough caught, horses kicked, harness broke, and he scolded, and whipped, and fretted, and fumed. The devil seemed to be in roots and horses and plough and harness, but the farmer never thought that the wicked one was in him. He blamed everybody and everything but himself.

After a weary, weary day, so full of vexations that he had a hundred times wished himself dead, in the night he gave himself up to the Lord Jesus Christ to be His for ever. A great peace came over him. The way to heaven opened up to him as plainly as to Jacob at Bethel.

In the morning his cabin seemed all changed. His wife and children, O how lovely and precious ! He thought he had never loved them half so well, or done half so much to make them happy as he ought to have done. O how loving and tender now to them were his words and tones !

He went forth with his team into the field. It was like a new world to him. The tender mercy and loving kindness of the Lord appeared to be over all His works. The trees clapped their hands, the birds sang praises, the morning sun poured a flood of joy over all, and the very stumps looked lovely. The horses caught the spirit of their master, and were gentle and docile. The plough and harness behaved admirably, and the hidden roots, so provoking before, seemed to have had the evil one cast out of them.

The secret of all was this, and he had learned it,

THAT OUT OF UNION WITH THE LORD, ALL THINGS
ARE OUT OF JOINT.

IN UNION WITH JESUS, ALL THINGS ARE HEAVENLY.

This was this man's first acquaintance with Jesus, and if such a change in one's daily life is produced for the time by one's first acquaintance with Jesus, what must it be, what is it in truth, when one comes into full and abiding union with Him, *and is kept in perfect peace because his mind is stayed on Him?*

And if Jesus in the field, amongst dumb brutes, and dead stumps and roots, is so precious, what must He be—what is He in fact, in the household, amongst the priceless immortal ones committed to our charge ?

A wife, whose husband was a zealous servant of Jesus in the ministry of His word, had a hard time of it. Her sweet little flock was too large for her. Her children were young, and near to each other in age ; and each one, like their father and mother, had decided traits of their own. Riches had not placed

them in command of an over-stock of servants. They were not oppressed with a superabundant salary. She had to be nurse, governess, cook, chambermaid, and servant of all works, and he had to be hostler, wood-sawyer, errand-boy out-o'doors, and general assistant within. Yes, she *had* a hard time, and at last began to be worn in body and weary in spirit. Matters grew worse instead of better. The children were harder and harder to manage, and the burden of life heavier and heavier to be borne.

She was a truly converted woman, and had a good hope of heaven,—and in truth often wished herself there. The Lord at length increased her burden by bringing to her a guest invited by her husband. She accepted it cheerfully as she could ; dreaded it mainly lest her guest should be put to discomfort. Not forgetting hospitality, it proved that they entertained an angel unawares. This guest was in full trust and in the abiding—kept in perfect peace, filled with the love of Jesus, the fulness of God. Through her sweet influence the children became more docile and manageable, and the mother learned the precious privilege of salvation from fret and worry and anxiety and every sin, by faith in Jesus, and accepted it in her heart. She *believed with her heart unto righteousness* ; but as yet she *had not confessed with her mouth unto salvation*. She believed and was right, had rest and victory. Her fret and worry and burden were gone ; but she had not yet the joy of the Lord, which is the strength of the soul.

Not long after the first guest had gone, the Lord doubled the good woman's burden of hospitality, by sending two other guests, servants of His, whom He had brought into like precious faith. He doubled also the blessing. Through them she was taught the sweet lesson of confession with the mouth unto salvation. First she opened her lips in prayer with and for

her husband, at home ; then in a meeting in both prayer and testimony ; and then came the joy of the Lord indeed into her soul. All her work and all her cares had been wonderfully sweetened, and thus wonderfully lightened and brightened before ; but now all this was doubled over to her more and more.

The reins of government by law had almost entirely slipped from her hands, but now she took up the reins of government by grace through faith—a faith working by love, and purifying the heart of the family, O how sweetly ! from the old spirit of selfishness, strife, temper, and heart-burnings.

The children saw it, and the eldest, who was hardest to manage and most disposed to take the reins instead of yielding obedience, a Christian before, gave herself up anew to Christ, in trust, to be saved and kept by His power from all her waywardness, wilfulness, and from every sin, and at once she became a great help and comfort to her mother. The younger ones felt it, and were softened by the atmosphere of love which had come to pervade their home.

The father saw it. He saw the wonders done for his wife, and scarcely less for his child, and his home, and was convinced. Before that, he had questioned whether he himself had not come into all he had heard unfolded in public and private teachings and testimony, but now he saw that there was indeed a precious power of love and light in Jesus, into which his wife and child had come, to which he was yet experimentally a stranger.

This he frankly accepted as true, and publicly confessed, and, that same night after he had done it, the Lord sweetly came to him upon his bed in the night watches, and asked—

“ What shall we then say ? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? Nay, God forbid : for how can we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein ? ”

To this he replied in his heart: "How can I be dead to sin?" The answer was:—"Be it unto thee according to thy faith."

Then instantly his soul was filled with joy in Jesus, as his own personal, present Saviour from sin. Time after time during that night when he had fallen asleep, his Beloved came in the voices of love, and awakened him, and gave him songs in the night: and next morning, in the public assembly, he gave glory to God, confessing with childlike simplicity that his own precious wife and child, and the manifest change in them and in the atmosphere of his home, had been the Lord's convincing voice to him to induce him to seek and receive this new and wondrous grace.

Thus was a household transformed, filled with the sweetness of love, and governed by the Saviour Himself.

Those perplexed with the cares of a family often think that it would be impossible for them to be kept in perfect peace. They say in their hearts, "Ministers and missionaries may be, and ought to be: but it is not for the mothers of large families, and the keepers of large household establishments." Yet of all people, they amongst the most of all, need this very keeping, and would be most blest by it. Still, when they hear about it they are always perplexed to know how it can be.

One of these perplexed ones was brought into the light in a singular way. For several days she had been hearing testimonies and teachings on the subject, but was thoroughly perplexed. At last she made up her mind to try one day more, and then if she could not understand it, give it all up. That evening the Lord sent one to take tea with her, with a message for her deliverance. She told her guest her perplexity, and said that her mind was made up not to go any more to the meetings, and added, "One thing I find,

trusting the Lord does not do one's housework, or get it done, when she is away. I went to meeting this morning, leaving everything arranged and provided, and came back to find everything wrong ; my faith didn't make the servants do right."

Her guest replied saying :—" Did you ask the Lord to make them do right, and believe that He would do it ? "

" No."

" Then you just *hoped* He would do it without asking ? "

" Yes."

" Well, where then did faith come in ? That was hoping, not believing ; it was simply presumption. Faith asks, and receives. Faith is careful for nothing, because confident that the Lord cares for us ; but it makes all *its requests known unto God with thanksgiving* by prayer and supplication."

The true idea of a life of faith instantly flashed into her soul, and looking into the perfect law of liberty she continued therein, and the very first day of her life in fulness of faith was the sweetest of all her life up to that time. Shortly afterwards, she said to a company of fellow Christians : " It pays ; I tell you it pays. That was the first day for many a long year that my temper had not been ruffled. My children and servants felt the influence. My boy came to me at night, and kissing me, said, ' My own dear, dear mother ! I am going to be a better boy after this.' Another of my children said, ' Mother, I do want to become a Christian.' A third one said, ' I mean to lead a different life after this ! ' Yes, I tell you it does pay."

Yes, indeed it does pay. There is no period or line of life in which it does not pay. If any one is in any position or profession or business in which he cannot have the presence and guidance and blessing of the

Lord, faith will soon bring him out of it, and that will pay. And to every one who is in that to which the Lord has called him, faith will ensure wisdom and guidance and blessing from the Lord, and that will pay.

The truth is that in every walk and work of life which is of God, each and all of His dear children have the assurance by promise that God will be with them: that they may trust fully in Jesus; and that they will have the Holy Spirit with them and in them, to teach them, guide them, keep them, and bless them; so that they shall themselves be right and do right, and all things shall go well with them.

Lavater, the celebrated physiognomist, told Stilling, the equally celebrated oculist, that the Lord answered his prayers in his childhood, and lifted him out of difficulties in his studies wonderfully. And Stilling told Lavater, and has told the world in his beautiful autobiography, a great many remarkable things done for him by the Lord in answer to his faith, not only in the days of his student life, but also through all his professional career, how He had sustained and delivered him and lifted him up. In fact no one can ever be all he might be in any line or calling, or in any work or relation of life, without the power of God, which comes by abiding union with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Business men frequently turn from the thought of living a consecrated life as a thing impossible for them. Yet in truth the life of faith is the only true life for a man of business to lead. A man of large business, who employs a great deal of machinery and very many men, was drawn into a meeting where he heard testimonies to the preciousness of a life of faith from a number of persons. He was convinced, and soon came to know for himself the truth of it all, and not only believed unto righteousness, but confessed unto salvation. He was very happy.

Five or six weeks passed by, and again he was in a similar meeting, himself one of the witnesses. He spoke of the extent of his business, of its monetary perplexities, and of the inevitable frictions between master and men, and confessed that the weight and wear and tear of his affairs had been very great, and were becoming more and more difficult to be borne until he had come into the experimental knowledge of the way of faith a few weeks before. "But," said he, "since that, though my business is the same, there is a world of difference in me. These weeks have been the happiest of my life. I get along with my men charmingly. I am not troubled about money as I used to be. In fact everything in my business—which is the Lord's—seems to run smoothly, and my life goes now like machinery in perfect order, well lubricated."

He was right. Faith is an amazing lubricator of the wheels of life in every line. Oh, if only all men could see it ! Oh that all our over-worked, over-burdened business men could learn the wisdom of putting themselves and their affairs all into the hands of the Lord ! How He would counsel them, guide them, sustain them, bless them ! Oh, how He would carry them in peace through all their perplexities, and hold them up under all their burdens ! What sunshine He would shed in and over all ! How sweet he would make the bitter ! How restful the toil ! How peaceful the disappointments ! How gainful the losses ! And how blissful His own smile upon them would be every hour of the day !

The time must come, will come, when men will learn that to be abiding in Christ is to be happy ; and to be out of the abiding is to be out of the only true line of happiness for which man was created.

VIII.

IT SHALL BE MINE.

A MINISTER'S wife heard one day, for the first time in her life, of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as an experience distinct from conversion. She was presented from the scriptural standpoint, and illustrated from life. And immediately she exclaimed in her heart, "By the grace of God, it shall be mine."

This was in a meeting, and she went home to work it out. She went to the Bible and to her knees, trembling * with fear begotten of hope, for God was working in her both to will and to do of His good pleasure. That night she unwittingly followed the Apostle's exhortation to fear,† lest a promise being left of entering into rest, she should come short of it, and to labor to enter into that rest, lest she should fail through unbelief. She strove ‡ to enter in *at the strait gate*, for she saw that many were seeking to enter in by the wide gate, the common way, which she had so long tried in vain, and were not able, but remained as she had done year after year, still in unrestful bondage to their own infirmities and sins. She was in real earnest; as much so as she had been when she sought the Saviour and found Him in the first i

* Philippians ii. 12.

† Hebrews iv. 1 and 11.

‡ Luke xiii. 24.

ance. Indeed, in seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit now, it was precisely as it had been with her in eking the baptism of remission of sins at that time ; her whole heart was engaged in the work. How happened it ?

The minister himself—her husband—had recently come into a new experience of union with Jesus that puzzled both him and his wife. The puzzle was, whether she was in the same experience before him or not. He knew that she had been in advance of him ; but whether she was in the large place into which he had now come, was the question. He then inclined to believe she was, but had made less to about it than he was now doing, because habitually less demonstrative than he. She knew that since her conversion, under the discipline of suffering, and care amongst her numerous little ones, and of work in the parish, she had been led into a trustful recognition of the constant presence and companionship of Jesus, by which she had been wonderfully cheered and sustained all along ; but was this what had now been found by her husband, or had he bounded suddenly out into light far beyond her ?

The subject of the higher life was before the community ; meetings in various places had brought it up ; the minister had heard of these meetings ; one of them had been in a former parish of his, and one of his old parishioners had come all the way to visit him and tell him the story of the wonderful change in himself and in others of his former flock : by these and other influences the Lord had pressed him, and brought him, and finally brought him out into the fulness of the blessings of the gospel. Zealous before, he now could find no rest until his present flock, and the neighbouring ones with their shepherds, should share his new-found pasture ; and so he had invited meetings in his own church. All this intensified the

puzzle in the mind of his wife, and she was wonderfully eager to hear.

In the same meeting were others as eager as she to hear and to have ; but there were some there who, though as quick to hear, were inclined to take back-seats and to hear with different ears. She heard to perceive and to grasp ; they to reason and reject. Her heart asked, Is there anything for me ? Theirs, Is there any flaw to justify one in not seeking anything ?

Therefore as she listened she exclaimed, " Ah ! yes, that is it. The baptism of the Spirit. God coming to dwell in us for ever. I have not received that. But by the grace of God it shall be mine." They meanwhile listened and blocked their own way by their own questions ; one asked, " Did not this belong exclusively to apostolic times ?" another, " Was it not just the gift of special miraculous powers ?" and another, on the opposite extreme, asked, " Do not all Christians, since Pentecost, receive the Spirit in conversion ?"

Oh, how they missed the mark ! If they had just asked, " Do *we need* such an experience to set *us free* and endow us for work ? Can we have it ?" the answer would have been, " Yes, yes ;" but they asked in heart, " Can we not theorise it away ?" and the answer was, " Yes ;" and they did so. Now mark the result. That night the minister's wife found her heart waking and pressing hard after the promised baptism of the Spirit. She did not, indeed, see that by *accepting* the promise she would surely receive the promised Comforter, so she wrestled when she might have rested. But the Lord soon taught her. For some time before this, she had been specially interested in repeating the Lord's prayer while about her work. So when she rose next morning and went about her household affairs, she took it up again as

usual ; and that morning, somehow, the petitions, "Thy kingdom come,* Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," had altogether a new meaning to her as to the place of the kingdom *in her own heart*—and as to the time when His will should be done—*now*. These things came out with amazing clearness and force to her. There she was, about her house, broom in hand ; and there the Lord was, in His house, sweeping away the cobwebs and dust of ignorance and unbelief from her heart to make room for His kingdom ; so when she came to the petitions, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," it was a real prayer for present and entire deliverance from heart evil. Passing from these to the ascriptions following, put in the form of reasons justifying what had been asked, "For *Thine* is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory," she perceived that the kingship of Christ was a present spiritual inner one, and the power by which He sets up His kingdom is that of the Spirit given unto us to dwell in us and work in us to will and to do the will of God. When she came to the "Amen,"—so let it be, —oh, what a ringing one it was in her heart ! Her whole soul responded, "So let it be, dear Lord, Thou art my king within, *Thine* is the kingdom, *Thine* the power, *Thine* be the glory, AMEN."

Wonderful was her deliverance ; great her joy ; the new King ruled well His kingdom, cast out all His and her enemies, and filled every province of her soul with His own peace-giving sway.

When next she went into the meeting, she was as eager to hear as ever, but with another feeling altogether. Now she understood the matter ; it was all true, all her own ; the puzzle was solved, and she was able herself to give in a testimony as unequivocal and

* Matthew vi. 10.

as ringing as her husband. And there sat the rejectors, just where they were before, not one inch ahead, still out at sea, still besogged in their own questionings, ringing fog bells, blowing fog whistles, rolling on the waves, blowing off steam, but making no progress.

But now as to their questions, is there anything in them all which of right should block one's way? Let us see. One thing is certain, they cannot all be well founded; for if it be true that the baptism of the Spirit was given only in apostolic times, then it cannot be true that it is given to all Christians since, in their conversion. If one is true, the other is not; but let us see whether either is true. First, Was the baptism of the Spirit for the apostolic day alone? Let the Apostles themselves answer. Let Peter be their spokesman. On the day of Pentecost,* after the baptism of the one hundred and twenty in the upper chamber had been noised abroad, and a multitude had gathered in the temple, hearing and seeing the wonderful intoxication caused by this new wine of the kingdom, Peter stands up amidst all his fellow apostles and proclaims to the multitude that this baptism is in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, that "It† shall come to pass in the *last days*, saith the Lord, I will pour out my Spirit upon *all flesh*."

If any one questions whether "the last days" here means the last dispensation, and whether "all flesh" means all men, the apostle does not leave these things in doubt; for when those convinced cry out, "What‡ must we do?" he answers, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ; for the remission of sins (first), and (then) ye shall receive the gift (baptism) of the Holy Ghost (as we have done);

* Acts ii. 1—14.

‡ Ibid. 37—39.

† Acts ii. 16, 17.

for the promise is unto *you*, and to your *children*, and to *all* that are *afar off* (in place or time), even as *many* as the *Lord our God shall call*."

Thus on the very day of its first fulfilment, the apostle settles it for ever, that the promise, whatever it is, is for all the children of God who accept the call.

But what was it? Was it the gift of certain miraculous powers,—called by the apostles gifts of the Spirit, tongues, prophecy, healing and the like? Or was it another greater, more glorious gift altogether than these,—the gift of the Holy Spirit as a person to us, to dwell with us and within us Himself for ever?

Let our Lord and Saviour, and His apostles, answer. Just before His arrest for trial and crucifixion, our Lord, in His conversation with the apostles the night He instituted the Supper, told them, and all* who through their word believe on His name, that He† would give them—or that the Father would give them in His name—another Comforter (besides‡ Himself and the Father, who would both come to them and manifest Themselves to them), the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, who was *with*§ them and should be *in* them, and who should abide with them for ever. A very distinct promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself; not of special gifts from Him.

And what did our Lord say the Spirit would do? Confer special miraculous gifts as His sole office work? No; but that He would *teach*|| them all things, lead¶ them, guide** them into all truth, and bring†† all things taught by Him into remembrance, glorify††† Him (Christ), take of the things that were

* John xvii. 20.

† Ibid. xiv. 16, 17, 26.

‡ Ibid. xiv. 18, 19, 23.

§ Ibid. 16, 17.

|| Ibid. 26.

¶ Rom. viii. 1.

** John xvi. 13.

†† John xiv. 26.

†† Ibid. xvi. 14.

His and show unto them, and* testify of Him. To which the Apostle Paul adds, amongst other things, that He will† strengthen those in whom He dwells, with might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in them by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love (Christ's love) they may be able with all saints to *comprehend* what is the length and breadth, depth and height, and to *know* the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God.

Here are blessed offices of the Spirit, as Teacher, Guide, Leader, Remembrancer, Glorifier of Christ, Witness for the Son of God, and Strengthener of the Saints. Yet, in all this, not one word about special miraculous gifts.

When our Lord was about to ascend from Olivet, He renewed His‡ promise of the Spirit to His Apostles,—definitely, as the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and§ told them that they should receive power in receiving Him, and should be witnesses for Him,—the Saviour,—a definite promise of the Spirit as a person, without allusion to special gifts.

In fact, we hear next to nothing of special miraculous gifts until we come to the historical fulfilment of the promise, when they appear; but they appear simply as extraordinary accessories of the great abiding general endowment received by the disciples in the Holy Ghost Himself given unto them. They were instantly taught, led, quickened, strengthened, reminded, filled with the fulness of God, and changed in a moment, as Solomon's temple was, when taken possession of by the Lord, into consecrated or sanctified temples of God.

That they spake with other tongues, was not the

* John xv. 26.

† Ephesians iii. 16—19.

‡ Acts i. 5.

§ Ibid. 8.

great matter, but only a sign of it. The great matter was that the Holy Ghost was in them and enabled them to speak with other tongues—with any tongue at all—the *wonderful works of God*.*

That they *could* prophesy upon occasion, was indeed evidence that the Holy Ghost was in them; yet it was a small matter in comparison with the grand fact that the Holy Ghost was in them, and that by Him they *did* so speak of the wonderful works of God, that a whole city was awakened in a few hours, and three † thousand converted in a day.

That they could heal in the name of Jesus,—some of them, not all,—as a special gift, was indeed a blessed thing for the healed ones, and a real attestation of the power of God with them; but that they all could, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them and working mightily with them, become glad and glorious ‡ witnesses for Jesus and win such multitudes to acknowledge Him as the Son of God in a single generation, and heal myriads of souls, was immeasurably more blessed.

The logic of all this leads to the inevitable conclusion that the baptism of the Spirit is not a gift of miraculous powers conferred upon a few, but the gift of the Holy Ghost Himself to us, to dwell in us, provided for every child of God who will receive Him.

And now last of all, do all who become Christians receive the baptism of the Spirit in their conversion?

It is certain that some have not done so. All who were converted before Pentecost, for example; and the Samaritans converted § after Pentecost, under the preaching of Philip, for whom Peter and John prayed afterwards effectually, that they might receive the

* Acts ii. 11.

† Ibid. ii. 41.

‡ John xv. 27; Acts i. 8.

§ Acts viii. 5, 14, 17.

Holy Ghost. Conversion, therefore, and the baptism of the Spirit are separate and distinct experiences, though they may, and ought to, come very near together.

It is equally certain that if we put side by side the present state of the mass of Christians and the state they would be in if they had received the Spirit as an indwelling one, leading them, teaching them, strengthening them, unfolding Christ to them, filling them with all the fulness of God, making them glad witnesses for Jesus, and attending their testimony with power that could not be gainsaid or resisted ; the parallel will prove a contrast with its irresistible conclusion that most Christians have not received the baptism of the Spirit in their conversion.

Does not the question spring from want of distinction between two great classes of the Spirit's various office-work for us ; in one of which He may be truly said to *be with us*, and in the other *in us* ?

Our Saviour makes this distinction in connection with the promise of the Spirit as an indwelling one, Who* *is with* you, and *shall be in* you ; these are His words. The Spirit is with us to convince before we are converted, and to regenerate us in the new birth ; and He is with us to work in us everything that is of God afterwards. But this is entirely a different thing from His† coming in to possess us fully for God as His temple, purify‡ us to God as His peculiar purchased possession by§ the blood of the Son of God, fill|| us with all the fulness of God, keep¶ us by the power of God, use us for the glory of God, attend us by the might of God, and** preserve us blameless unto the coming of Christ.

* John xiv. 17.

† Acts ii. 4.

‡ Titus ii. 14.

§ 1 John i. 7.

|| Ephesians iii. 19.

¶ 1 Peter i. 5.

** 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

The true question for every child of God is, not whether all who become Christians do receive the baptism of the Spirit in conversion, but 'Have I received it at all, either then or since?' and the true conclusion would be that of the minister's wife,—if they have not, "By the grace of God it shall be mine."

IX.

PERFECTLY SUITED TO ME.

A YOUNG woman, whom I know as worthy of a confidence, says that at a certain time she was favoured with a remarkable inleaving into the knowledge of God, by something not unlike that which happened to the man* whom Paul knew, who was caught up, whether in the body or out of the body I knew not, into the third heaven and saw things unutterable. Still less unlike, perhaps, the frequent scenes in the life of Miss Pierrepont, afterwards Mrs Edwards.

There is nothing wonderful about this young woman except what God has wrought in her by His Spirit. I speak of this because we are so apt to think that the precious things of God are *above us*. While, truth, our Father has no favouritism † in His family, does seem good to Him to reveal the secrets of the household to the babes, ‡ the little ones, to the lowly ones, however old or young in years, or high or low in knowledge, or rich or poor in this world's goods. Christ, the fulness of the Godhead, the express image of the Father, is THE meek and lowly one, and is called His Holy § Child Jesus.

It was a little child, not a sage, that our Lord || :

* 2 Cor. xii. 3, 4.
§ Acts iv. 27.

† Acts x. 34.

‡ Mat. xi. 25, 26
|| Mat. xviii. 1—4.

up amongst His followers as an example of what they must become to be great in His kingdom. The Lord came to the little boy Samuel* in the days of Eli, and began with him in his childhood a life-long intimacy, which made every word of his lips and every act of his life faithful to God. Daniel† was but a youth, though he was of the seed royal,—the Lord does not despise royal blood in a lowly heart,—when God revealed to him the secrets of His counsel which made him wiser than all the wise men of Babylon, and set him on high among the princes of the court wherein he was a captive. Joseph‡ was only a lad, his father's errand-boy, when the Lord began to talk with him and tell him His purposes and plans in dreams of the night. And David was a shepherd boy when the Lord took him§ from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to make him the Prince of sweet singers and the King of Israel.

It is a sad mistake for any one to turn away from *anything* offered in the promises, however great and high it may seem, saying "this is too high for me." Though God is the High and the Holy One, the way He manifests Himself is so simple that only the lowly ones can see Him.

This young woman had been for some time desiring more and more deeply to know more of God. She did know Him. She had acquainted herself with Him, and was at peace. She knew, too, the sweet significance of the name|| Jesus, as that of her own present personal Saviour from sin. Yet she was not perfectly satisfied. Her heart yearned for deeper knowledge of God. She says, "From day to day, my desire after God grew, until at last He sweetly unfolded Himself to me, and filled and satisfied me

* 1 Samuel iii. 1—10.

† Daniel i. 3, 4, 17.

‡ Genesis xxxii. 2.

§ 2 Samuel vii. 8.

|| Mat. i. 21.

perfectly with Himself. Shall I tell you when He was found of me? Just when He said He would be, when * I sought Him with all my heart." The Lord suddenly † came to His temple. So He often comes. As the lightning shines out from under one part ‡ of the heavens, flashing its light through another part, so He came to her, and covered § His tabernacle with the cloud of His glory, and filled it with the Shekinah of His presence. Her bodily strength was gone in a moment, but her spiritual strength was renewed like the eagle's, and she was lifted as upon cherubic wings, above the world. Consciousness of all said and done around her remained, but she could not speak a word or move a muscle. The knowledge of God by perception, without a word or an effort, flooded her, and absorbed her whole being.

The grand showings of the hour to her, were these two: on the one side God's perfect fitness to her, and on the other her perfect fitness to Him. She saw that God as a Being, was exactly suited to every part of her being, to her mind and heart and will.

He showed her, also, that, suited perfectly as He was to her, so perfectly her being was suited to His, and that she must be in Him, and live in Him. His thoughts must be her thoughts, His loves her loves, and His will her will. He showed her this under the symbolism of a bough in the breeze. She saw that she must be like the most delicate bough, moving with the gentlest motions of the air, which way soever it might be.

This showing was not unlike to that made to Ezekiel,|| in the vision of the wheels, which moved as the Spirit moved, and stopped when the Spirit stopped, and very like that to the beloved Apostle in Patmos, of those

* Jeremiah xxix. 13.

† Malachi iii. 1.

‡ Mat. xxiv. 27.

§ Exodus xl. 34.

|| Ezekiel i. 20.

in heaven who went whithersoever* the Lamb did lead them. Beloved, I speak of these things, not to put you upon a stretch for visions and revelations. These are very wonderful and instructive, but, in the nature of the case, cannot be permanent. But Paul could not remain in the third heavens, absorbed in unutterable things, but must come back amongst men, to dwell in things utterable, and utter them for the glory of God and salvation of men. But, beloved, there is a wonderfully precious lesson taught by them : *it is the perfect fitness between God's being and ours*—yours, mine, and each and every other one of God's dear children.

Suppose you and I should each be lifted up to-day, into God, as this young woman was, and should see God in His suitableness to us, as she saw Him in His suitableness to her, would it not be as perfect in our case as in hers ? However unlike we may be—I am peculiar, so you may be also—yet would not the suitableness be perfect in each case ? And would it not be the same with every one, if each of all the children of God should be so lifted up in Him ? Certainly it would.

The sun in the heavens with his clear shining light enriching us, enveloping, covering every one, filling each and all with his brightness, is not as perfectly suited to each, as is God in Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. The air in which we live, and move, and have our being, fitting us like the skin, yea, fitting us within and without, pressing upon every part of our bodies and entering into us in life-sustaining power through our lungs, forming the vital flame in every artery, vein, and fibre of our organism, is not so suited to us as is God by His Spirit.

God does not ordinarily so lift His children up into Himself as to take away, even temporarily, their

* Rev. xiv. 4.

strength, and unfit them for the moment for life amongst men, but He does a far better thing than that for all who seek Him with the whole heart ; He *comes down* to them upon earth amongst men, in spirit, and takes up His abode in them, fitting them and filling them perfectly with Himself; suiting His mind, and will, and heart to theirs, by fitting theirs to Him. This He does not as the vision of an hour, but as a reality that shall never end. If God should—if it could be so—lift us all up, and keep us for ever absorbed in extatic visions of Himself, it would be a perfect and permanent unfiting of every one of us for our life on earth, in whatever sphere engaged. But by coming down to us and coming in to dwell in us, He secures the very opposite result. He fits us to fill, and fills by us each, the sphere appointed, whatever it may be. There is a double fitting and filling secured by it. God fits and fills us with Himself, as our souls fit and fill our bodies, and as the light and air fit and fill us, suiting us perfectly, flooding us with ocean fulness. And He fits and fills by us, every one, the several spheres given us to occupy.

This coming down of God upon men to dwell in them and fit and fill them with Himself, to fit and fill by them the several spheres designed for them, is precisely what took place on the day of Pentecost, and in the subsequent days while yet the Christian's privilege of being baptized with the Holy Ghost was not lost out of mind.

By this means* God gave some to be apostles, some evangelists, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, for the edifying of the body of Christ, for the perfecting of the saints, till they all come in the unity of the Spirit to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

* Eph. iv. 11—13.

It is also exactly what was done, in the measure to which they in that day were prepared to receive it, in the days of Moses, by which Moses was fitted and filled for his special mission as the leader and lawgiver of his people under God, for his sphere ; Aaron, as minister of worship, for his ; Joshua, as minister of war, for his ; and Bezaleel* and Aholiab, as administrators in artisanship in building the tabernacle in theirs ; and all the under-workers in spinning, weaving, needle-work, and the cunning work in gold, silver and brass, were in theirs. This is, in truth, the grand design and provision of God for His church in the world, by which the full and complete unity of the body in its Head and in its Spirit shall be effected, and the perfect fitness and efficiency of each and all its members shall be secured.

In the primitive church, these two things were more fully secured than ever before or since. Apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, teachers, and people, were all baptized by the one Spirit into the one body, and each was filled and fitted for the individual work assigned of God, and thus a wonderful unity and efficiency were brought about.

They were all one in Christ Jesus, a unit in Head ; one in the Spirit, a unit in heart, and will, and action. However widely separated one from another, and however varied the spheres they filled and the work they wrought, there was perfect harmony, for their one Lord dwelt in all and directed everything in all, and their one Spirit animated and actuated all.

When the one hundred and twenty became three thousand, and five thousand, and thousands of thousands, their unity continued as long as the church continued in all its members to receive the one baptism of the Spirit into the one body, the church, under the one Head, Christ.

* Exod. xxxi. 2 ; xxxv. 30—35 ; xxxvi. 1—4.

When the one church in Jerusalem came to be multiplied by hundreds,—scattered throughout all the world where there were Jews converted to Christ,—and even when the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was fairly broken down, and churches were planted, and converts multiplied, throughout the known world, there was no permanent distraction or division, until it came by the gradual practical abandonment of the privilege common to all Christians, of receiving the Holy Spirit.

And be assured, beloved, if ever the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ is to become a unit again, it will be by the practical recognition, the actual reception, of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by whom, dwelling in its members, it will come again fully under the one Lord and Leader, into one body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all.

A minister, who throughout all the years of his arduous labours had prayed, preached, and planned for union, and failed, came one day into an assembly met to promote the experimental reception of the Spirit by Christians of all denominations, listened awhile and exclaimed :—“ I have found it ! I have found it ! This is the true union, and I am in it ! ” This is indeed the true union, and there is no other that will stand or is worth having.

This, too, is the only way of securing full and abiding individual efficiency. One who has been active beyond most other active lay evangelists, said, “ I have had, during the last six months, a restful fulness of the spirit, that I never knew before, and it seems to me that the Lord has enabled me to *accomplish* more in saving men in this six months than in six years before.” The Lord’s true tabernacle and temple, His habitation through the Spirit, was not that in the wilderness, nor that on Mount Moriah, but is *that on the Mount Zion above*, a living habitation of

living souls, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and saved and perfected by the Spirit, through the instrumentality of those in whom He dwells. Therefore, if He fitted, filled, and used Bezaleel and Aholiab for the cunning work of the tabernacle, which was to perish with the using, how much more should He fit and fill those whom He uses for the incomparably more delicate work of soul-saving and soul-perfecting, for His imperishable house not made with hands. And if it was needful that He should so fit and fill men for those works of art, how much more us who are engaged in a work of heavenly wisdom.

Beloved, is not this, then, the one great want of individual Christians? *The* baptism. *The* baptism, I say; not *a* baptism, but the *gift* of the Holy Ghost as an abiding, guiding, teaching, girding, strengthening one; fitting, and filling, and using the recipient in the work to which He calls him, and attending him with power wherever he goes, and in whatever he does? This, nothing else but this, will give us to see again the amazing progress that attended the spread of the gospel in its primitive days.

One thing is certain, it suits me exactly, and I would not live without it for worlds.

X.

A GIFT.

A KNOCK at our cabin door announced one, who at that time was a comparative stranger to us, but who ever since has been a sister beloved in the Lord. Her satchel and umbrella indicated that she was out for a visit, not for a call, and she was not slow to tell what had brought her to us. As we greeted and welcomed her, she turned to my wife and said:—“ You see I have come to stay. For some time past I have had no rest day or night on account of my sins. I feel that I am a Christian. My sins are forgiven. If I should die it would be without fear. I know that my *Redeemer liveth*. My great trouble is the power of sin. I cannot break it; I have tried consecrations, and strugglings, and prayers, and trust in the Lord for help, and all in vain. I am at my wits' end, and I have come to you to stay until I shall be delivered. I know you will not turn me away.”

She was gladly welcomed and made at home, of course, and all things except the indispensables were joyously put aside, that by any means she might have her eyes opened to see Jesus and accept Him as her Saviour from sin. Twenty-four hours passed, and still she was struggling on. Forty-eight hours brought no release. Dinner time came on the third day, and my wife went out into the lean-to kitchen at the back of

the cabin to prepare our repast, and when it was ready came in to summon us out to the table. I rose, but our guest sat still. Her head was bowed down, her face in her hands, and her hands in her lap, and she paid no attention to the call. After a few moments it was repeated ; still she sat unmoved. A third time she was invited, this time by name, but remained still as a statue. At last, just as I was starting to lay my hand on her shoulder and shake her out of her reverie, she slowly raised her head, and began speaking like one in a fit of abstraction, saying : " His unspeakable gift.—A gift.—Yes, a gift.—Why, I can accept a gift."

As these words fell from her lips, the calm of a heavenly peace came upon all her features, followed quickly by the glow of inexpressible gladness. Her struggle was ended. The great secret was learned. The gift was accepted. Her whole being was given up a living, willing, joyous offering to God.

A gift ; yes, a gift. The unspeakable gift of God. Any one can accept a gift. The least of us all can accept the greatest of all gifts—God's gift of Himself. God has given Himself to us—all He is and all He has. To have Him in all His fulness, and with Him all things, we have only to accept Him as a gift.

I say reverently, that God could not help giving Himself to us, for He is love. Whole-hearted love cannot withhold itself, nor anything it has or anything it can do, from the object upon which it is placed. The greatest heart-ache possible to one who loves another with all his heart, comes if he be prevented from giving himself to the one he loves. Hearts innumerable have been broken by thwarted love. Reason has often been dethroned by it. God is love; not to have given Himself to us—I repeat, that in all reverence it is said—would have been an infinite and eternal heart-ache. To give Himself to us is a boundless, endless joy.

God is love. Love has ruled in the manner of the gift. Reason might have been satisfied with the gift of Himself to us in His works, or, at most, in His Word. That is, in a revelation of Himself as given to us, by a simple declaration of the fact to us in language. Not so love. Love must express itself so as not to be misunderstood. Love must embody itself in a form to be fully apprehended. God is love, and therefore took upon Himself our own form, and gave Himself to us in such a way that we could see Him and know Him, as we can see and know one another; and gave Himself for us, a ransom to redeem us unto Himself, for He so loved us that He could not help it; not because we were lovely, but because He is love.

Even so love was not satisfied. Love never can be satisfied until the object upon whom it is placed has been rescued, if in peril, and lifted to the highest bliss and dignity it has power to bestow. God is love, and could not be satisfied with revealing Himself in person in our nature and giving Himself a ransom for us on the cross. He must give Himself to us, impart Himself to us, take possession of us and give us possession of Him. Nothing short of this could satisfy God, for He is love. To satisfy Himself, He has given Himself to us in Spirit, and comes to us to impart Himself to us and to dwell in us for ever. Love draws together and makes one of the twain husband and wife, if it be genuine and mutual. Thenceforth they two are no more twain, but one flesh; truly so, and in their children their blended unity is seen. God's love has craved and devised a unity between Himself and us, more perfect and complete than is possible between husband and wife. He has given Himself to us, to come by His Spirit into our spirit and dwell in us. Husband and wife may be separated by space, but God and His loved ones in whom He dwells may

be one and inseparable in all times and places—God in them, and they in God—and the communion between them may be as much easier, clearer, sweeter, dearer, as the communion of thought and affection is closer than that of words. Spirit in spirit ; God in spirit, in our spirit, witnessing His presence and love by such communion as only spirit with spirit, love with love, can know.

O how wonderful the ways of love ! O how wonderful this three-fold gift. God's gift of Himself to us ! How simple ! How beautiful ! Well might the celebrated Genevan put it all in each—the Father, Son and Spirit.

“ ALL FROM THE FATHER.

ALL IN THE SON.

ALL BY THE SPIRIT.”

The Father gives Himself to us as manifested in the Son. The Son comes to us by the Spirit, and manifests Himself and His Father in Him in our hearts. The Spirit, given by the Son from the Father, comes in all the fulness of the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Ghost—to abide in us and unite us to God by an actual inner union, than which no other union imaginable can be more perfect.

“ A gift. Yes, a gift ; the unspeakable gift of God. I can accept a gift.” The least of us all can accept this greatest of all gifts.

The Apostle Peter tells us how, and the way is very simple. In his answer on the day of Pentecost to those pricked in heart by his previous words, he said :—“ Repent, every one of you, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” They had seen and heard that day, in the hundred and twenty who had that morning received the gift, such demonstrations as filled them with won-

der, and led them to ask what it meant, and what it was.

Peter had explained that it was the gift of the Holy Spirit as promised by the prophet Joel, shed forth by our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, but who was alive from the dead and enthroned in power. This explanation brought home to them two things: their guilt in killing the Prince of Life, their own Messiah; and the amazing fact that through Him whom they had killed, God was fulfilling His great promise of coming in Spirit to tabernacle with men and fill them with His fulness. Then they cried out:—"Men, brethren, what must we do? What must we do to be free from our awful guilt? What must we do to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?" The answer of Peter was full, clear, simple, ample to meet the question in both respects. In substance it was: *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and confess your faith in Him before men, and ye shall receive both the remission of your sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost;* for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

The three thousand who gladly received this word that day, exemplified for us the way clearly. They believed in Jesus on the strength of the promise, without waiting for feeling, for evidence, for experience, for the gift of the Spirit, for anything whatever, and went forward at once to the open confession of their own guilt and of their faith in Jesus, and they received the gift according to the promise. The pledge of the gift is in the promise. The promise must first be accepted as true and rested in, or the pledge it contains cannot be fulfilled. When the promise is believed, one must act on his faith without feeling or anything else, and confess his faith in the Saviour on His promise, without anything more, and

thus accept the gift. To believe the promise, is to accept the gift ; but there is no true faith in the promise unless one stands confessed to himself as resting upon it, and is ready to confess and glad to confess to others, that he is resting upon it.

ALL IS THE GIFT OF GOD IN CHRIST.

ALL IS IN THE PROMISE.

ALL IS ACCEPTED BY FAITH.

The mistake of seeking to obtain the gift, instead of simply accepting it by faith, is one which keeps multitudes from receiving it.

A woman had found her completeness in Christ by accepting all as in Him on the strength of the promise, and it made her spirit so sweet, her life so peaceful, and shed such a gladness over her household, that her husband, who had been sceptical about salvation from sin in this life, became deeply affected and thoroughly convinced of his error. He held his peace as long as he could ; when he could hold it no longer he asked his wife, saying : " My dear, tell me, how did you obtain this blessing that has so changed you ? " Her answer was : " I did not obtain it at all. It is a gift. I just believed in Jesus, and He gave it to me."

The Holy Ghost is God's crowning gift of Himself to us. Let no one, however, mistake the fruits or gifts of the Spirit, for the Spirit, and look for His gifts instead of accepting Him. The fruits will follow ; but if they are sought, and expected, and exacted, as if they were the Spirit Himself, disappointment is inevitable. And the Spirit is received by faith in Jesus, who is the baptizer or giver from the Father. *Christ Himself* must be accepted and rested in, on the strength of the promise. Christ Himself, not peace, love, joy ; not emotions or feelings of any kind. Christ, without feeling ; and by Him as from

Him, certain to be given, the Holy Ghost must be accepted without feeling or evidence of any kind except simply the word of promise. The Holy Ghost is not feeling, nor peace, nor joy, nor emotion of any kind. His gifts are peace, love, joy, and every true and heavenly grace; but He is Spirit, and you cannot feel spirit any more than you can see spirit. He may dwell in you by faith, without a particle of feeling, as truly as He does when by His work in you He fills you with emotions unutterable.

A sad mistake is made by those who unwittingly confound the gift of the Holy Ghost Himself, as promised by our Saviour, with His gifts. They seek the gifts of the Spirit instead of the Spirit; or, rather, they seek His work instead of accepting Him. They seek, strive, agonize, months, years, it may be, for the witness of the Spirit, when they ought just to believe in Jesus on His word that He gives them the Spirit, and so accept the gift. The Holy Spirit, accepted by faith in Jesus as His gift, will quickly witness for Jesus in the soul; but they, not seeing the difference, seek the witness when they ought to accept the Witnesser, and so fail of the witness by not receiving the Witnesser.

Another mistake, no less sad, is sometimes made from the same cause. One who seeks the witness instead of accepting by faith the Witnesser, may, to save him from becoming completely disheartened, have given him an inletting into the grace of God which fills him with blessedness, and he sets it down that this is the Blessed One that he has now obtained. It is what he has been seeking as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and so he thinks that at last he has found it in very deed. Soon, however, his blessedness begins to fade, and shortly is gone; and now, as he confounds the blessedness with the Blessed One, he sets it down that he has had the baptism of the

Holy Ghost and has lost it again. Then he begins anew his weary seeking for the lost blessing. Oh, how unutterably sad this mistake! Oh, why could he not distinguish between the Blessed One Himself and the blessedness he imparts! If he would only believe in Jesus and in the gift by Him of the Blessed One as ever with him, feeling or no feeling, then, if the blessedness came, it would be welcome indeed, and if it faded away, it would not take away the Blessed One. He would still remain for ever, and would quickly and easily give again the blessedness.

XI.

THE GIFT RECEIVED.

THE gift of God is God's gift of Himself. Embodied in His dear Son, Christ Jesus, He has given Himself to us in full manifestation, and given Himself for us as a ransom for our sins, to redeem us to Himself and for Himself. As a quickening Spirit to convince, convert, and purify us unto Himself, a peculiar, a treasured people, zealous of good works, He has given Himself to us in the Holy Ghost, to possess us fully by His own indwelling presence, working in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure, that we may work out the salvation we have in Him.

Salvation, in all its parts, is the gift of God in Himself, as given unto us in Christ Jesus, and possessed by us in the Holy Spirit, who takes possession of us.

God's gift of Himself to us, is by promise, in the Word. He has made Himself over to us, as it were, by a deed of gift, or by a will and testament, to which He has affixed His name and set His seal, and then placed it upon record for us. No title-deed could be more perfect and final. No will and testament could be more sure and settled. The gift is made and recorded, and ready. It is all-inclusive, unreserved, and complete. All God is, and all He has, is made over to us absolutely and unconditionally. And in Him

we have all His gifts, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. All in Christ from the Father by the Spirit.

Although the gift is absolute and unconditional, made over to us by deed and by will placed upon record, yet it is impossible for us to possess it without taking it. It is a gift to be taken, not a something which attaches itself to us whether we will or not. If we take it, we have it. If we refuse or neglect to receive it, we no more have it than if it had never been given to us.

Presented to us in word, we can receive God as our God only by faith. If we take Him at His word, and accept Him as ours, He is ours to all intents and purposes. His own word, expressing His own will, makes Him ours in all His offices and relations to us.

It is obvious, however, that we will not, cannot, accept Him by faith in His word, without turning to Him with all our heart. We must turn from the world as our portion, or we cannot take God as our portion. We must turn from our own wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, to God, and find in Christ, God manifested to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, or we cannot find our all in Him. And this turning to God is repentance. It is the publican's cry, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.' It is the prodigal's mind made up to return, saying, 'Father, I have sinned against God and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as thy hired servant,' and the prodigal's return. And only so returning can the prodigal's acceptance of the ring, and the shoes, and the robe, and the feast, and the gladness, become ours. The tabernacle of Moses must be left for God by all human feet, and released to God from all human hands, even those of Moses, God's ruler of the people, and Aaron, God's High Priest, before the

Lord Himself can come into it. The temple of Solomon must be entire, completed, fitted, furnished and left, turned over a complete offering unto the Lord, or He will not possess it and fill it with His presence in glory.

It is equally obvious that neither this turning to the Lord with all our hearts, nor trusting fully in Him, one or the other, or both together, constitute the actual possession of the Lord. They constitute the outstretched hand receiving the gift, the open door by which the prodigal comes in, the returning steps by which the prodigal comes home to his father's house. Thus turned to, and taken at his word, the Lord Himself makes His word good, and comes into His tabernacle, His temple, enters the open door and sups with us, and we with Him ; runs to meet us, falls on our neck, rejoices over us, puts the ring, the shoes, the robe, upon us ; makes the feast, and makes His household ring with His own joy and gladness in receiving us.

As Christ is the fulness of the Godhead in bodily manifestation, and as we are complete in Him ; as He is fully given unto us in the Word, and is ours when accepted by faith ; as we have only to accept Him to have Him, and only to have Him to have all things ; this matter of salvation is wonderfully simplified. The unspeakable gift of God is Christ. Accepting Christ we have God's unspeakable gift. Truly, it is so simplified, that a child may grasp it. The least of us all may take this greatest of all gifts,—the gift of God Himself to us in Christ Jesus.

Let no one, however, mistake, and say to himself, I have accepted Christ, and therefore I am possessed of all there is in Him, and have no need of any further or deeper experience. Stay, my brother. Is Christ really, practically, and experimentally made unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?

Do you find your daily wisdom in the daily counsel of Christ? Do you trust Him actually to guide you in every step of your journey, and in every work of your life? Do you find in Him your righteousness, and does He free you from all condemnation, and from every cloud of stain and sin? Do you find in Him your present sanctification? Are you so given up to Him, and so occupied by Him, that self and the world have no place in you, and that Satan, when he comes with his temptations, has nothing in you, but is met and rebuked by the Lord, to whom you refer him? Are you redeemed and delivered from all fear of death, and from all the power of sin? Have you already, by faith in Christ, your risen Saviour, the fulness of resurrection-life, by the power of His presence in you as your quickening Spirit? Is it Christ for you to live, but gain to die? Are you saved? Saved from sin? Filled with the fulness of God?

If to these questions, all or any of them, you must in all honesty say, No; then, though you have Christ, you have not yet experimentally come into all there is in Him for you.

A child may be born to the possession of an immense estate, and it may be all his, and yet he may not know, or be able to know, a word of it. It may be told him in his infancy a thousand times over, and yet he may not take it in at all.

By-and-by he comes to know enough to be able to comprehend something about great estates, and may be told over and over again, that he was born heir to an immense estate, the gift of his father, who died, leaving it by will to him; and it may seem to him like an idle tale—a nursery story. He can conceive of a great estate, and of its belonging to a man, but not to a child like him. At last, however, he is convinced of all, and in heart accepts the fact, that he is indeed the heir to the estate willed to him;

and, henceforth, hope springs up and stretches forward to the day when he shall come into the actual possession of his property, and be no longer under tutors and governors. Time passes on, and the day comes, and he takes possession, and has in his own hands the estate to which he was born, in all its length and breadth. Now, for the first time, he is prepared fully to feel and know his actual ownership, and to begin to develop the resources of his estate, and to enjoy them and use them for all practical purposes.

You have been born heir to God, a joint heir with Christ, and you may have come to the knowledge of the fact, and to the acceptance of it, and may have Christ as your own, with a good hope of glory, and yet not have Him fully unfolded to you, filling you with the fulness of God. You may have Him as your righteousness, and be delivered from condemnation and the fear of hell, and still be thinking about, or pressing for, sanctification as a growth of your own virtues, instead of finding it already in Christ Himself. Or you may be saying to yourself, I do trust in Christ alone ; I do not look for anything apart from Christ ; but I know I am not right ; I do want the power of the Spirit upon me.

Beloved, if this be so, it is clear that you have not yet accepted what there is in Christ for you. You have not by faith accepted your completeness *in* Him, but you are looking for it rather *from* Him.

Do you not know that the Holy Spirit, if you will follow Him wholly, will lead you out of all thought of the impartation of power from Him to you? Do you not know that His very sealing power and witnessing act in you is that of bringing you to the acceptance of Christ as all you want? Satan may try to make you look for Christ *and something besides*, to make you complete. The Holy Spirit will lead you to accept

Christ as the end of all and the fulness of all, and to be satisfied with Him.

If an artist had at the expense of great pains, labour, time, and money, and with exquisite taste and skill, with masterly genius, taken and prepared for panoramic exhibition all the historic scenes and places of the Bible, and should come to your place fully commended and accredited, and issue public notices that at a given hour and place he would exhibit his panorama, and you should go to see it, there are some things you would not do. For one, you would not,—if he should announce that he would first unfold a comprehensive picture of Bible lands and Bible scenes all crowded into one, (if such a thing were possible,) and afterwards would unfold, step by step, the several grand stages of Bible history, dispensation after dispensation, step by step, you would not, as soon as the first grand comprehensive picture had been made to pass before you, say, "There I have seen it, I have seen all; there is no more for me."

Yet is not that just like those who have the theory that as all is in Christ, and as in conversion they have taken Christ, therefore there is nothing more for them to experience?

Another thing you would not do. You would not be looking at the panorama and asking for the panoramist besides. You would know that you could not have the panorama, except by the good offices of the panoramist himself, and you would be content to know you had him, and let him remain behind the curtain invisible and go on with his work. You would not thank him to neglect his work of unfolding to you and leading you on through the wonderful scenes prepared for you, to come forth and exhibit himself instead.

The work of the Holy Spirit is that of unfolding the fulness of God in Christ, and of giving us to find our

completeness, our satisfaction, not in Himself, but in Jesus. Therefore, when you say, "I am trusting in Jesus fully, but I want something more ; I want the Holy Ghost in power upon me, besides," you do not know what you say. You are like one who should not be satisfied with the panorama, but demand the panoramist. Why, beloved, if you have Christ as all and in all,—your own glorious Saviour, your wisdom, your power, your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption,—you have Him so because *you have the Holy Ghost*. While, on the other hand, if you are thinking that you take Christ for all, and are yet unsatisfied with Him and wanting something besides Christ, you are not taught or led by the Spirit in this, and have need to go to Christ and give yourself up to Him anew and more completely, and to accept Him anew and more completely, and find in Him your completeness, so that you shall be satisfied and want nothing besides Him.

XII.

HIS BACK TO THE SUN, LOOKING AT HIS OWN SHADOW.

ONE says, "Oh, now I see ! how plain ! What a dunce not to have seen before !"

Another says, "What, so plain, and I not see ! How stupid I am !" Yes, indeed ! stupid enough ; yet you need not accuse yourselves as if you alone of all people were dunces. Not so. We are all just like you. What is the difference between you two ? Simply this : that the one has his face to the light, and the other to the darkness.

A New England teacher—able, cultivated, quick, and sagacious—sought the light of life in its fulness, yet the darkness, with an occasional gleam as a happy exception, continually thickened upon him. At last, in the darkest hour of the night, the light dawned upon him. That was a glad and glorious sunrise to his soul. Then, like all the rest of us, he was filled with astonishment about his own past stupidity. He saw how it was, and put it in a word, saying, "All this while I have been like one with his back to the sun, looking at his own shadow."

A Western man, thirty years an infidel, six months a believer, three months in eager pursuit of full salvation, came all the way over the mountains, from the valley of the Ohio to the city of New York, to find

the boon he sought. In a meeting, the light suddenly broke over him and flooded his soul. He was on his knees. The moment he rose to his feet he exclaimed, "How wonderful! three months I have been in an ocean of glory with my eyes shut."

Yes, true, and how? Ah, just as were the eyes of the New England teacher closed to Christ by being fixed on self. He who looks to Jesus is in the light. He who looks at himself remains in darkness. All the light of life is in Jesus, none in ourselves. Every one of us who truly seeks full salvation *at any cost*, and fails to find it, has in one way or other his back to the Saviour and his face to self. Every one who faces about comes into the light. A true view of the nature of full salvation will show this, called by whatever name it may be.

WHAT IS IT?

In the dedication of the tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness, God has given us a wonderful symbol of the transaction between Him and ourselves, by which we come into his fulness. When Moses had finished both the tabernacle and its furniture, according to the pattern shown him in the mount, the Lord commanded him to set it up and put everything in place, and he did so. Then the Lord commanded him to put upon Aaron the holy garments and anoint him, and take the consecrating oil and touch the tabernacle itself and everything in it, in token that it was set apart or sanctified to God. Then to offer incense, and place the shew bread, and light the lights in the holy place, and offer burnt offerings on the altar before the door of the tabernacle. This done, Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and feet at the laver. Then the priests all withdrew. Last of all, Moses himself withdrew and set up the outer gate and took his hands off. Thus he abandoned it to the

Lord. There was no human foot in it, no human hand upon it.

Up to this moment all was darkness within in the most holy place. There were no windows in it, nor any lamp, for it was made to be lighted by the Lord Himself.

Up to this moment the Lord abode in the mount. Sinai was His tabernacle. Four thousand feet above the plain, amidst darkness and clouds, He dwelt. Thunderings and lightnings made the mountain shake and tremble to its base.

At this moment, when Moses abandoned the tabernacle to God, with the smoke of its offerings ascending from the altar, and its ark sprinkled with blood, and turned from it, his face to the Lord in the mount, his back to the tabernacle, the pillar lifted from the mount and came down upon the tabernacle, and covered it with the veiled glory of God, and filled it with the unveiled splendors of the Shekinah of His presence.

This was the transaction. Moses set apart the tabernacle, and everything in it, to the Lord, by consecration, left it, turned from it to the Lord and looked to the Lord Himself to take possession of it, and cover it and fill it and dwell in it in His own personal presence. This on Moses's part. On the part of the Lord, His own incoming and indwelling sealed and completed the whole.

Never was symbol more perfect than this. It shows forth exactly the transaction between God and ourselves, by which we are set apart to Him, and in which He takes abiding possession of us for Himself.

Three questions arise here: First, what did Moses do to induce the Lord to come in and upon the tabernacle?

Nothing. The blood cleansed it for His occupancy, and the Lord needed no inducement to

occupy it. Moses simply did what the Lord commanded him to do, set the tabernacle apart to the Lord, offered the offerings, and left it to Him. This done, the Lord, of His own free will, came in and upon it, and there abode. The Lord needs no inducement to take entire possession of us. All we have to do is to give ourselves wholly up to Him and *let* Him have us without reserve, and He will quickly take us as His own.

The second question is this : What was that which the Lord did to the tabernacle ?

He sanctified it to Himself by His own incoming and indwelling presence, a perfect symbol of the way He sanctifies us to Himself.

The third question is this : What was the nature of the change wrought in the tabernacle ? anything in its form, material, or structure ?

None whatever. Its form remained the same, its structure the same, its material the same. Its outer covering of badger skins remained badger skins still ; its inner overlaying of gold remained gold still ; all between, whether wood, or linen, or broidery, or silver, or sheepskin dyed red, remained the same as before ; no change was wrought either in their inherent nature or relative order. Yet all was completely transformed, sanctified and glorified by the glorious use to which the tabernacle as a whole, and each particular part, was now put as the home of the Lord of glory ; all His own forever ; every part human yet divine, earthly yet heavenly.

This invisible symbol is precisely the invisible change that takes place in the sanctification of man to God. No change passes upon the form or structure or fibre of the body ; it has simply become the temple of the Holy Ghost. No change has come upon the texture or essence of the mind ; it has simply become the secret place of the Most High. No change has

been wrought in the constitution of the sensibilities ; only now God has made them the ark of His covenant, the place of His law and testimony, the seat of His throne of mercy, overshadowed by cherubic wings. No change has taken place in the native powers of the will, yet oh how changed in its choice ! Self no more ; God evermore its object, and everything in harmony with God's will. The change practically is this : before this transaction we were trying to make something heavenly of ourselves, instead of receiving the Heavenly One to dwell in us and be all to us ; while in this transaction we are given wholly up to God and taken possession of by Him, and He becomes to us all in all. *We have exchanged self for God, and made infinite gain by the transaction.*

Between the symbol and the reality there is this difference : the incoming into the tabernacle was visible ; in us it is spiritual, seen only by faith. Moses with his back to the tabernacle, and his face to the glory on the mount, saw with his own eyes the glory of the Lord descend and rest upon the tabernacle and fill it. We see the Lord in His word, and take Him at His word, and stand in Him on the strength of His word. With Moses it was sight, with us it is faith ; he saw and believed we see not, yet believe and rejoice in the glory of God, and He makes His word good. He comes in and reveals Himself to us, and fills us with His presence. This is the sealing of the Spirit. When we accept Jesus as God's offering for us, sufficient to cleanse us, and intrust ourselves wholly to the Lord, our own consciousness testifies to us that we do so ; and when He comes in by His Spirit, He witnesses to us His presence by the manifestation of Jesus to us in His light and love and peace and joy, and in Him we are satisfied. Thus the transaction is sealed by the Lord. Let us mark well that it is when the ark—the heart—is sprinkled with the blood of the

Lamb, and when the smoke of God's offering, which is Christ, is ascending from the altar,* that the Lord comes in, and the Spirit witnesses His presence. Call this sanctification if you will ; it is so ; it is just what the Scriptures everywhere represent sanctification to be,—that is, an entire setting apart of ourselves to the Lord, and a complete possession of us by the Lord : call it holiness if you will ; it is so ; it is being wholly devoted to the Lord by our own act, and taken by the Lord wholly as His own, which is being made holy to the Lord : call it the rest of faith if you like ; it is so ; it is resting from our own works to make ourselves better, as God did from His in creation, and as Moses ceased from his works on the tabernacle, and letting God enter into His own rest in us, and give us our rest in Him : call it the higher Christian life if you please ; it is so ; it is Christ our life in us, higher than the mixed life preceding it, the life now abundant : call it the baptism of the Holy Ghost if you choose ; Christ Himself called it so ; it is the full and abiding reception of the Holy Ghost by turning ourself entirely over to the Lord and looking to Him alone, and accepting from Him, by faith in His promise, the gift of the Spirit as coming and abiding in us for ever.

The essential things in this transaction are two, as the parties are two ; yet it is one whole, and turns finally upon a single pivot, and that pivot is the act of turning finally and for ever from self to Christ. This may take place in any one of many ways. Often by some single sentence of Scripture, with its emphasis upon some single word. Luther, on the *Santa Escala*

* The inner chamber was the Holy of Holies, but the altar was Holiness of Holiness, from which the ark itself was cleansed by the blood. See Exodus xl. 10 ; marginal reading. There is no getting to the one but by the other. The way to the Holy Place and to the Holy of Holies is one way, not two ; that is, by the altar and the blood.

in Rome, was turned from self to Christ by the text, "The just shall live by faith," with its emphasis on the word live. The text, "Only believe," with its emphasis on the word only, was the pivot in the case of one well known to me. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins," with its force all concentrated in the word He, as revealing it to be the province of Jesus to save us from our sins, was the pivot in my own case. "Come ye out from among them and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, saith the Lord," with its special force in the word receive, was the pivot in the case of a dear fellow-worker of mine, as it has been in many other cases known to me personally. The transition may be made under different circumstances in different cases. When the temple of Solomon was dedicated, after the anointing, and the abandonment to the Lord, the Levites, as a grand choir, sang that wonderful choral, the 136th Psalm, with its refrain, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever;" and as they sang, the glory came from the east, gilding the Mount of Olives, the very spot afterwards touched as the last place upon earth by the feet of Jesus, and as king and priests and people, with backs to the temple, and face to the glory, gazed and sang, and the Lord came in by the eastern gate, so came the Lord amidst the shout of Israel to the temple. So comes He often while the voice of song is uplifted in the assembly of His people to souls given up to Him. To the tabernacle He came in silence; so comes He often to souls awaiting Him in the silence of night, or of the closet or the forest. But, however it may be, the favoured moment of His coming is the restful moment when all has been given up to Him, turned over and left in His hands, and the back has been turned from self to Christ.

The identity of the change under whatever circumstances, by whatever means, and however called, is singularly illustrated in

A PASTOR'S EXPERIENCE.

He had been greatly interested, but also perplexed for years about the matter. As a Christian, he coveted the best things ; as a minister, he longed for power. In his own flock were witnesses for Jesus as their own complete Saviour. Amongst his brethren in the pastorate were some whom he loved making a like confession of Christ. But their theories and terms stumbled him. He dared not oppose ; he could not accept.

His attention was by-and-by turned, in the course of his studies, to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as taught in the New Testament. True, he did not see in it the experience of which he heard his fellow Christians and ministers speak, but he did see plainly in it something like an experience after the new birth, and just what he felt to be needed in his own soul. A convention was called in a village not far from the city of his residence, to promote full salvation. He heard of it and went ; and as he entered the door, the first words that fell on his ear impressed him, oh how profoundly ! The speaker was setting forth the baptism of the Holy Ghost as the most distinctive form in which the experience of full salvation is taught and exemplified in the New Testament. Instantly the truth flashed upon him, that the experience which had so perplexed him in years gone by, was indeed the baptism of the Holy Ghost. His heart responded, "Yes, Lord, that is it ; I see it now ; it is all scriptural and true ; and by the grace of God it shall be mine." This coincidence was of the Lord, and he saw that too ; another thing was also prepared by the Lord for him. One of the best men of his own beloved flock, rose immediately and gave in his hearty adhesion to

the teachings he had just heard, and said that he felt it to be of unspeakable importance that the churches should receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and closed by saying how hungry the people were to have this matter set before them from the pulpit.

This brought the pastor to his feet with a plea of guilty. Pointing to the member of his own church just seated, he said, "There is the proof of my failure. That is one of those under my pastoral care. He tells you how hungry the people are to hear this truth in the churches. This convicts me." Then, after frankly stating his past interest and perplexity, and how he had been led to study the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and how that very morning, for the first time in that assembly, he had come to have his perplexities all solved, he declared his determination never to rest until he should be fully and permanently endowed by the Spirit, and begged all present to pray for him.

Before the convention closed, he arranged for the call of a similar one in his own city to meet in his own church. The time came; convened on Thursday, it was to close Sunday night. Thursday and Friday passed and Saturday also, until the evening session, and he had not received the fulfilment of the promise. Other ministers and many Christians were already rejoicing in the fulness of the new-found blessing, but he had been so occupied with the hospitalities of the occasion and in taking notes for the press, that the time had slipped away and was gone, and his hope was not realised. As he entered the church Saturday night, these facts came to his mind with great force, and he began to question whether this blessed opportunity would not be finally lost by him. He had consecrated himself in mind and will and heart. He had accepted the offering on the altar as his, and the blood as all-cleansing. In that moment he gave up all hope of doing anything more himself, for already he had done

everything he could think of, and so he gave the whole matter over into the Lord's hands and there left it for ever ; and in that moment of despair, to his utter amazement, the great light rose in his heart. An hour afterward he seized a favourable moment and told his story, oh, how sweetly, how clearly, how simply ; and after stating the facts he said that in that moment of despair, as he was taking his seat, having abandoned all to the Lord, and left it for ever, the Lord suddenly came to him, and His train filled the temple. So beautifully was the symbol realised in his case, and he was made the temple of God.

The question is often asked, concerning this experience,

WHY, AMONG EARNEST CHRISTIANS SO FEW COME INTO IT ?

The reason undoubtedly is that so many have unwittingly adopted a false aim. They seek an increase of their own virtues instead of the incoming and indwelling of the Lord in them. They fail to see that the Scriptures set forth the reception of Christ, not an increase of their own virtues, as the great end to be gained. If they aimed to receive Jesus instead of improving themselves, they would quickly come into the experience ; but while they seek self-improvement as their sanctification, instead of Christ, they will never come into the experience. What they need is self-abandonment, not self-improvement ; for by this alone can they make the glorious exchange of self for Christ.

Their misapprehension is twofold : they mistake self-improvement for both sanctification and growth in grace, while it is neither the one nor the other. Sanctification, what is it ? It is self given over to Christ, and Christ received as all in all. Growth in grace, what is that ? It is growth in God's love to us un-

worthy ones. Grace is God's love for us, not our virtue. The more we know of His boundless love to us, and of our own unworthiness, the more we grow in grace, and in this the Holy Ghost leads us as soon as we receive Him and are given up to His guidance. This is precisely the opposite of growth in a sense of our own virtues. He who is looking for the increase of his own virtues, is looking at himself, not Christ ; and is standing with his back to the sun, looking into his own shadow to see it improve. Therefore it is that they who aim at sanctification as an increase of their own virtues fail of full salvation, which is another thing entirely. And this accounts for the fact that so many really earnest Christians fail of the experimental acceptance of the Lord in His fulness.

Another question is asked by many who have given up the idea of growth into sanctification, but have not received Christ in His fulness, that is

WHY DO I FAIL OF THE EXPERIENCE ?

The answer is easy. The cause will be found in one of two things ; either you have not touched the tabernacle and all its furniture with the consecrating oil, as henceforth the Lord's, and accepted Christ as your one all-sufficient offering, or you have not finally abandoned all to Him and faced about from self to Christ. You are either still at work upon yourself, trying to get yourself all right before giving yourself to the Lord, or if you have ceased from your own works your hand is not taken off, and your face is not turned away to Jesus. So long as your thoughts centre in yourself in any way, instead of leaving yourself in the hands of Christ *and letting yourself alone*, your face is still to your shadow and your back to the Saviour. Then face about at once, leave yourself with Jesus, and let yourself alone ; take Him as your Deliverer and Keeper, and you will not fail.

XIII.

BOTH SIDES; OR, THE KEY SUR- RENDERED.

AN English merchant came to America on business. Whatever benefits he gained or conferred while here, commercially, they were not the greatest; he received and gave in imperishable treasures incomparably more. Oh blessed commerce! May it increase a thousand fold between our two nations! Yes, and between all nations. It would add to the wealth of the world more than all the gold mines of California, Australia, and Africa; yes, more than all the cotton-fields and cotton-mills of the world, and would bind all nations together in the precious bonds of an endless peace.

The last words of the merchant to me still ring in my heart. He was about to sail for home. We met for the first time seven or eight days before, and now we stood like David and Jonathan with souls knit together as one: so quickly and so deeply does the love of Jesus bring the unity of His followers when they are let into its fulness. Happy day it will be when by such an inleaving into His love all His dear disciples shall be so united in one! Then will His own prayer be answered: "That they may be one as We are one; Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us, that the world may know

that 'Thou hast sent Me, and that Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.' Wonderful love! Wonderful unity! Wonderful result!

As we were parting, I said, "Farewell. God bless you. He is with you, and will keep you." He responded, "Yes, and you." And then in tones saturated with tearful tenderness he added, "Never fail to present both sides."

I understood him perfectly. He had failed through long years to apprehend the giving side, and so to gain the full benefits of the receiving side. And I am sure he felt that I had failed to present the necessity for giving all up to Jesus as clearly and fully as I had presented the privilege of receiving all in Jesus.

The first reflection of my heart was the question, "Is this so? Have I failed in this way?" And my first effort was to magnify my own faithfulness; but this was quickly checked, and the permanent conclusion reached that "Whatever the past has been, the future shall not be one-sided." How fully this conclusion has been justified God knows. I know that the grateful remembrance of the merchant's last words has not ceased, but increased with each passing day.

The merchant had been educated at Cambridge for the Church, but afterwards entered into commerce. Years before his visit to America, the book "The Higher Christian Life" had been blessed to him. He sought to follow out its instructions fully, and thought he had done so: yet, though greatly advanced, he had failed of the complete deliverance from self and sin for which his soul yearned. Much light had dawned upon him, and he was established in the assurance of final full salvation through union with Jesus, but still remained in an unwilling bondage, like that of the man under the law, portrayed in

Romans vii., and had finally almost persuaded himself that his bonds could only be broken at death.

In our very first interview, however, the Lord graciously led him to give himself wholly over into the hands of Jesus and let himself alone there, and so let Jesus do His own work of delivering and keeping him from the evil to which he had been subject. So now he was at liberty, for the Son had made him free indeed. Now he had given all up to Christ as well as taken all in Christ ; he was Christ's and Christ was his. And now he saw clearly the one-sided mistake he had been making in past years, and therefore was tenderly solicitous that others might be taught both sides of this blessed commerce.

THE SEVENTH IN LINEAL DESCENT

from one of England's great Christian poets, bearing his name, was the unconscious means of bringing the English merchant and myself into personal acquaintance with each other. And his experience exemplifies the one-sided mistake of failing to receive all in Jesus, as clearly as that of the merchant does the error of failing to give all up to Jesus. A beloved fellow-worker living in a village near New York, yet quite aside from its manner of commerce and circles of social life, invited a union convention for full salvation in the place of his residence. People came from far and near, and we had a glorious afternoon and evening there. Amongst those in attendance was this descendant of the poet. During the first session, one at whose instance this young man had come to the convention introduced him kindly, in order that he might state his own case. The young man rose and spoke substantially as follows : "I am a student of theology. A few months more will complete my course of study. Then I shall be expected to enter

the ministry of the Gospel. I shrink from it with unutterable dread, because I know that I am in heart utterly unfit for the work. The conviction of my need of being purified from pride, ambition, vain-glory, and all unhallowed motives and feelings, has been growing upon me all the while since I entered the theological school, and our course of study and training has seemed to foster and develop instead of uprooting and destroying the works of the wicked one in my heart. I sought counsel and aid of my fellow-students, but they gave me no help. Nothing that I could devise, or others suggest, was left untried; still the darkness grew upon me, and became intolerable. At last I sought help from the senior professor in the school, venerated by all for his devout life, and told him that unless I could find relief I must abandon all thought of ever being a minister. He said, in tones of deep sadness, 'My dear brother, I can give you no help. At this moment I myself am in darkness deeper and more agonizing than you describe.' From this interview I went away more disheartened than ever. Yesterday I stated my case in a meeting, and at its close the brother who introduced me to you told me of this convention, said he intended coming to it, and invited me to accompany him. I came, and here I am. Can you help me?"

The Lord uses the weak for His own great purposes. He caused me to see clearly the young man's mistake. So I said to him, "You have opened your heart so freely to us that I am sure you will not be offended if I ask you one or two questions. You have tried everything you could think of, you tell us, to obtain the deliverance from sin that you need; have you come to your own wits' end about the matter?"

"Yes, I have indeed."

"But you have never stopped trying, and accepted

the fact that Jesus would Himself take care of the whole matter, have you?"

"No. I have thought I must keep on trying till delivered."

"Will you then stop trying, and *let Jesus* deliver you and keep you?"

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "I see it. I see it all now."

The young man's transition from darkness to light was so evident that a thrill of satisfaction was evinced in all parts of the assembly, and shortly afterwards he rose again and told us that the struggle was over, his bondage broken, his soul free, and he was filled with the fulness of God.

One present during this scene gave some account of it next day, in the Fulton Street Daily Prayer Meeting. The English merchant heard it, and heard my name mentioned in connection with it, and learning by inquiry that I was still there, he came, and so we met, and he found rest in Jesus.

The two sides are indispensable to completeness in Christ. Like the student, every one must fail who tries to give all to Jesus, and yet fails to commit all to Him, and accept all in Him. While on the other hand, like the merchant, all will come short who think to receive all in Jesus by faith; but fail to give all to Him in consecration.

A YOUNG LADY MISSIONARY

in her experience happily exemplified both sides, the receiving and the giving in full salvation.

She became a Christian while yet a child. When the time came for deciding what her life-work should be, the question was pressed upon her whether she would become a missionary and go to India. She answered "No. But I will serve the Lord as a teacher, and remain at home." A teacher she became,

and was not unblest in her work. Many of her pupils were won to Jesus. Yet this did not satisfy her. Memory was busy with the old settled yet unsettled question, "Will you be a missionary and go to India?" Conscience troubled her, and she found no rest. At last she reversed her answer, and resolved to give up teaching and go as a missionary. The authorities received her kindly, but declined sending her to India until she had tried her hand amongst the freedmen of the South. South she went, and became wonderfully successful. Many were converted. Schools were formed, and churches established. The Lord gathered about her a circle who loved her dearly, and seemed to depend upon her for life and progress as followers of Christ, and for support and defence against the prejudices of an unfriendly world around. So she made her a home there, and nestled down in it, as she supposed, for life. By-and-by her nest was disturbed, unsettled, broken up, and she was compelled to choose between going further South for a new work and a new home, and returning North with the view of going to India. She chose the North and India, but again was disappointed by lack of funds to send her so far. Her going to India seemed to turn upon the question of money, so she ventured to come to the great commercial metropolis, in the hope of collecting the requisite amount.

Here she was; her heart was all wounded and bruised and sore. The Lord had torn her from her home to go to India, then disappointed her of going and sent her South, given her a home and a flock there, then suffered her to be unsettled, her home broken up, and her flock left without a shepherd, and she driven back to the old purpose of a missionary life in India; and then He had disappointed her again and sent her to New York, amongst strangers,

to beg money for her outfit and expenses. The old wounds and bruises were opened afresh with the new, and her lot seemed too hard to be borne. Withal deep down in her soul there was a longing which neither North nor South, neither home nor India, could have satisfied. She could not have defined it, yet she felt it profoundly. To satisfy this longing she sought out all the meetings she could find giving any promise of light upon the question deepest in her heart. She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. At last one Sunday morning she heard a sermon which pleased her very much indeed, and the preacher gave notice that he would lecture that evening upon "How Bunyan's Pilgrim got the victory." "Ah!" said she, "that is just what I want to know, how to get the victory; and I will come again and hear him." Strangely enough, as it seemed to her, she was constrained, by one whom she could not deny, to give up going there and go to a little meeting of Friends in the upper room of their house of worship. This was another disappointment, little in itself, yet large enough to make all her wounds bleed afresh.

There in that upper room the Lord met her in a wonderful way. I am telling what I know, for I was there. By special invitation I went, and by a question concerning sanctification, asked of me by name as soon as the meeting was opened, I rose to speak. Question followed question on the subject, until it was nine o'clock, before I was permitted to take my seat. Little, however, did I know that the young lady missionary was listening, and that the Lord was doing a great work in her heart. One of the illustrations of the true nature of sanctification which I used was the dedication of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, its consecration by Moses on the one side to God, and on the other side the coming of the Lord

in and upon it to fill it, possess it, and control it as His own for ever. This the Lord used to show her that she had never yet given herself up to Him, to be filled and kept by Him, nor had she received Him as an indwelling God and Saviour, sanctifying her to Himself fully and for ever. She saw that she had been serving the Lord in her own will, and that whenever her plans were crossed, her heart was wounded and bruised. Her will had never been laid down to let His will flow over it.

Another of the illustrations given was that of a house built for the owner by contract. The owner could never take possession of his house until the contractor left it, turned the key upon it, and handed it over to the owner ; then, not till then, he could go in and dwell there, and beautify and furnish it, and use it as he pleased.

By this the Lord showed her that she had never given Him the key of her heart. Then came the question, "What if I do give Him the key ? Maybe He will not let me go to India, and how could I bear that ? Or maybe He will require me to plead His cause before mixed assemblies of men and women : that I can never do. I could speak to coloured people, but to address the intelligent and refined in their assemblies would be impossible." Her soul became a real battle-ground, and the contest was for the key of her heart. No bloody field was ever more terribly real than that, no pitched battle ever fought had life and death, liberty and bondage, hinged upon its issue more absolutely than that. It lasted till near midnight, then Jesus conquered, she surrendered to Him the key of her heart, and He came in and filled her with His own sovereign presence, and enthroned Himself in her heart of hearts, to reign in her for ever.

Then she took her Bible and opened it, not know-

ing where, but hoping it would be where He should direct. It was at Isaiah liv. As she read it under the illuminating power of her Sanctifier, she was filled and flooded with the glory of the Lord. From that one chapter He gave her more than she had ever found before in the whole Bible from beginning to end. Every good thing her soul could crave for herself, for the South, for her exposed flock left there, for India and the perishing ones there, for all her wants and wishes in this world and in the world to come, He unfolded to her as assured in Him, in His boundless wisdom, power, and love, from that single chapter. This was the beginning ; the next day, and day after day from that night forward, she found herself rejoicing in the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God, and joying in the God of her salvation with unalloyed satisfaction and ineffable delight. Her circumstances were not changed in the least. Her home in the South was not restored to her, nor her flock less exposed than before ; she had no assurance of going to India, and she was called to speak to mixed assemblies of the refined and intelligent, and did it with great delight ; and here she was still in the great metropolis, amongst strangers, without money or pledges of money to take her to India ; the questions where she was to go, when and how, were still without answer, *but the key of all was in the hands of the Lord.* And she was glad to have it so. In Him were all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and love, and she knew it in her inmost soul, and that was enough to satisfy her perfectly.

This for her circumstances and for her burdens, for the South and for India : for herself the Lord was her portion, and her exceeding great reward ; He had taken the key and opened her heart, and enthroned Himself there, and was radiating His light and love through all the chambers of her soul. Never before

had her mind been so employed, strengthened, exalted in all its powers of comprehension, and thought, and reason, or so filled with all that is noble, pure, and divine ; never had her heart been so expanded and flooded with all that is lovely and heavenly ; never had her will been so perfectly and sweetly in exercise, as now that it was brought in complete subjection and harmony with the will of God. And never had life been so rounded out to the ideal of all her mind could conceive, or her heart could desire, as now that it was all in the hands of the Lord, for Him to order it as He pleased.

Wonderfully the two sides, giving all and receiving all, were before her at the moment her final struggle began. And blessedly both had their issue in the final surrender of the key into the hands of her Lord.

XIV.

GOD'S LIKENESS IN MAN.

THE Bible is one book, though composed of many parts. Its unity in spirit and truth is more complete in binding and print. Once it appeared to me like a collection of tracts as diverse from each other as the names they bear, without any more connection in spirit and truth than the men had who wrote them. But I now see a wonderful unity through all their diversity. The Bible has two sides, an inner and an outer side, while the outer side is human, the inner side is divine. The diversity is in the outer, and the unity is in the inner side.

To what shall I liken it? In one respect it seems to me like a continuous web of the most exquisite tapestry, comprising a vast number of successive figures, and each figure in itself a picture of some historic event or personal incident. In this wonderful tapestry the pictures wrought out are human, but the warp, which is the foundation of all and which runs through all, giving to all continuity and unit, perpetual progress and endless unfolding, is all divine. It begins with the counsels of Creation, and ends with the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. It opens with a paradise lost, and minates in the paradise found. It is stained at the first with human pollution and blood,—the picture

ion of lust and the blood of violence,—yet presents from first to last the blood and water of cleansing and of love as the one only way of purity and of peace. The Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, is the one in whom Patriarchs, Prophets, Priests, Psalmists, Kings, and Apostles are all bound up together in one grand whole.

In another aspect the Bible to me seems less like a web of tapestry with its succession of pictures, than like a rainbow in its continuous lines of heavenly beauty. Its human side, with its life-pictures, charms me. I am child enough to love them, and find ceaseless delight in turning them over and over. I do not wonder that the art-genius of the ages has expended itself more in the reproduction of the scenes of the Bible than in all other things together. There are enough of them to beautify all the palaces, mansions, cottages, and huts in the world, and plenty to spare. But when I look steadily at the divine side of the Bible, somehow these diversities, though not lost, cease to appear so prominent, and the underlying veins, all divine, come forth in heavenly harmony, each of the seven shaded off into as many different tints, all blended into one grand arch, the seal and token of God's covenant of love; and in all the glory of its beauty and promise I see it as coming forth from the Sun of Righteousness, whose white and pure light is thus separated in the prism of humanity through which from heaven it streams down upon earth.

Still another comparison serves to help me—that of an orchestra. There was a time when in listening to the notes of a large number of instruments I was confused by the different parts borne by them in the one piece of music they were rendering. To my untutored ear there seemed little of harmony and nothing of unity, and only a bewildering diversity of sweet sounds.

Ere long, however, out of what had seemed only a sort of dulcet jargon, there began to emerge to my apprehension a harmony and unity which soon became the glory of the whole. I perceived then that each instrument and every part supplied its quota to the completeness as well as to the fulness of the river of song. So was it once, so is it now, with me in respect to the Bible. Its diversities once jarred upon my sensibilities, and confused me; but now that I see its harmony in unity, I am never weary of its ceaseless song of praise, poured forth as the voice of many waters, to God and the Lamb.

LIKENESS,
DOMINION,
UNION,
REST,
ABIDING,
ABUNDANCE,
FRUITFULNESS;

these are seven golden threads of the divine web, seven heavenly colours in the token of the covenant, seven parts of the river of song.

God's image and likeness in man had its genesis in the counsels of Creation, and its wonderful embodiment in Christ upon earth, and is to have its glorious unveiling in the redeemed ones in heaven.

In the counsels of Creation God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. In the fulness of time Christ came forth as the Son of Man, yet the express image of God, the fulness of the Godhead in bodily manifestation. And in the fulness of eternity those whom Christ has redeemed from the guilt and pollution of sin upon earth are to shine forth as the sun in the heavens, in the fulness of the divine image, changed into the glory of a perfect likeness to the Son of God who has redeemed them.

WHEREIN MAN'S LIKENESS TO GOD CONSISTS,

is variously shown in the Bible. One of the definitions of the word likeness is fitness, and this to me has been the key to the whole matter. A key fits its lock because it was made for it. In form it bears no resemblance whatever to the lock, but in fitness it bears its image and likeness perfectly. The eye in form is not in the least like the light, nor the ear like sound, yet in fitness the eye and light, the ear and sound, are as like as things can be to each other.

In the counsels of Creation man was made for God; his whole nature is suited to God's nature like a key to its lock, and like the eye to light and the ear to sound. Man's mind was made on purpose to take in the light of the knowledge of God, to drink in and pour forth the music of His praise, and to unlock and unfold, possess and freely distribute, the unsearchable treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are stored up in God. Man's heart is wonderfully suited to receive and return, and to herald forth to others, God's love which passeth knowledge, and so to be filled with and pour forth to others the rivers of the fulness of God. And man's will is constituted in all its powers to find its highest exercise, the glory of its activity and energy, in the acceptance and fulfilment of the will of God.

Yet this likeness to God, in which and for which man was created, inheres not in the form or texture or structure of man, but in his attitude toward God. The whole man, turned away from God to self and Satan, takes on at once the likeness of the wicked one. As the mirror reflects man's image when he stands before it, so man reflects God's image when God is set before him in all his thoughts, affections, and purposes; or if he turns away from God to self and Satan, a pervert,

then the image reflected in him and taken on by him is selfish, sensual, devilish.

HOW GOD'S LIKENESS IS GIVEN TO MAN,

though not distinctly set forth in the account of his creation, is abundantly shown in the process of redemption. It is by the actual indwelling of God in man.

There may be, or may not be, an intimation of this in the saying that God breathed into man the breath of life and he became a living soul. When Christ would strengthen the faith of His disciples to wait for and accept the promised gift of God—God's gift of Himself in spirit to dwell in them—He breathed on them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." But it is certain that God's gift of Himself in spirit is His final gift to us, and that it is by His indwelling in us—in spirit and strengthening us by His Spirit in our inner man that Christ may dwell in us by faith, that we are brought to behold Christ as He is, and to be changed into His image, from glory to glory.

The indwelling of God in man was as plainly revealed in the sweet name Immanuel in the Old Testament, as it was gloriously verified in the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament. Immanuel literally rendered is In-man-God. "Im" is only another form for in, and "el" is God. Its significance pre-eminently, therefore, is, God in us.

God in us in spirit is the complement of God with us in the flesh. The purpose of grace would have still been altogether incomplete, if after the manifestation of God in Christ we had been left without God's gift of Himself to us to dwell in us for ever in spirit. He did not thus leave His purpose incomplete, but did give us Himself to dwell in us for ever.

Accepted as an indwelling God, our mind given up

to Him as its rightful object, guide, and director, our heart as His rightful throne that He may mould it to Himself and fill it with Himself as He pleases, and our will submitted to His will to run in all the way of His commandments, and to do whatever He pleases ; He at once transforms us into the image of Him who dwells and rules within.

The reason why so many true Christians fail of coming into the full likeness of Christ, is that though they have accepted Him as their atoning Saviour, and exemplar of holiness, they have not accepted Him as an indwelling Saviour, and committed to Him the whole work of transforming them into His image, and keeping them by His power.

HOW GOD'S IMAGE IN MAN WAS DESTROYED

seems simple and plain. Man, seduced by Satan, was turned from God to self. God was excluded from His rightful place as an indwelling one. Self was enthroned, and selfhood, which is the strength of the kingdom of darkness, took the place of God. Thus he ceased to bear the image of God, who is love, holiness, peace, and became selfish, sensual, devilish. He even went so far as to make for himself images of beasts and birds and creeping things,—yes, even of devils,—and worship them.

THE SACREDNESS OF GOD'S IMAGE IN MAN

is shown by many things in the Bible.

First, in the penalty attached to the prohibition of evil. Nothing less than capital punishment could express God's abhorrence of that hateful thing which would separate man from God, and destroy the image of God in man.

Then it was shown again in the doom of Satan for

his crime of seducing man from God. Nothing short of capital punishment could satisfy the divine indignation against one guilty of a thing so horrible. And there was a divine as well as a poetic justice in the form of the sentence, "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head."

A third instance in which God's estimate of the sacredness of His image in man appears is that of the penalty attached, in the covenant with Noah, to the shedding of man's blood. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man." Capital punishment, the highest possible penalty, alone could suffice for a crime so great.

This is also the significance of the woe pronounced by our Saviour upon those who should offend one of the little ones who believe on His name, and of the *one* sin which alone can never be forgiven ; in the one case it is the crime of turning one of His little ones away as Satan did Eve, and in the other case that of rejecting the Spirit who comes to abide in man and transform Him into the image of God.

So also is the meaning of the Apostle's saying that "He who shall defile (destroy, in the Greek) the temple of God, him will God destroy." He who shall drive the Spirit from his heart, him will God destroy from His presence and the glory of His power.

The significance of the sacredness of God's tabernacle and temple of old was simply and grandly that of the sacredness of the image of God, by the indwelling of God in man.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD'S IMAGE IN MAN

is expressed in the name "Sons of God," given to those who lived by faith in the early morning of the world. As a man's children have their father's blood

coursing in their veins, so God's children have Him in their souls. As they bear their father's name, and inherit his property, so these are called after God, and are His heirs.

But it is chiefly in the wonderful fitness of God to man and of man to God, by reason of which a sweet communion and wonderful fellowship, more intimate, more precious, more full than can obtain between parents and children, or husband and wife, takes place and continues and increases between God and His children, that the blessedness consists. It is as free and as full and as constant as the drinking in of the light, or the breathing in of the air, and it is sweeter than anything that ever entered the heart of man to imagine.

THE FULNESS OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN UPON EARTH

is simply the measure of the fulness of the image of God borne by our Saviour while here in the body. He says to the Father, "The glory Thou gavest Me, I have given them ; that they may be one in Us, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us ; *that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.*" Which means this, that we may be so filled with God and transformed into His image, that we shall become a living demonstration to the world that God was in Christ, and that He does love them even as He loves His Son.

And the way of coming into the fulness of God's image while yet in the flesh, is simply that of accepting the fact that as Christ has bought us by His blood, and purified us to God, He will also give us the Holy Ghost to dwell in us, and to present our bodies as living temples to Him, that He may come in and dwell

in us, and have the rule of us within and without in all things.

GLIMPSES OF THE GLORY

of God's image in us in the world to come are given us all through the Bible, but especially as it draws toward its close.

Our Saviour, after promising His disciples that some of them should not die before they had seen Him in the glory of His kingdom, took with Him Peter, James, and John, up into the mount, and was transfigured before them, and Moses and Elijah appeared *with Him in glory*, in the like glory. They were with Him and like Him. We shall be with Him and like Him. Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not appear what we shall be. But when He appears we shall be like Him.

John had seen Jesus transfigured before His ascension. Afterward in Patmos Jesus appeared to him in His glory. John saw Him, and described Him minutely. His head and His hairs like wool, feet as burning brass, eyes as a flame of fire, countenance as the sun in its strength, insomuch that he fell before Him as dead.

Yet, only a little while after, a messenger came from Jesus to John to show him things to come, and he was so like Jesus that John seems to have mistaken him for the Lord Himself, and so fell at His feet; whereupon the messenger exclaimed, "See thou do it not: *I am of thy brethren the prophets*: worship God."

But what shows the likeness of the redeemed to the Redeemer in glory yet more forcibly, is that this very mistake was again made by the beloved disciple very soon afterwards, and was again reproved in the same way.

Thus culminates this wonderful line in the end of

Revelation, which first appears in the beginning of Genesis.

The one grand lesson it impresses is this: the privilege of the follower of Jesus to accept the indwelling of God in the soul now, and so be fully transformed here below into the image He bore upon earth, and then give full and free play to the hope of the glory in the world to come, which awaits us when we shall come to be with Him where He is. Amen and amen.

XV.

THE PRESENT TENSE OF FAITH THE PERFECT TENSE OF VICTORY.

THE letters of the word "now," transposed make the word "won." The word now, accepted as the word of faith in Jesus, becomes the word won, as the word of victory in us. This is true of all things promised in the gospel, and of every stage of salvation proffered in the promises; true alike of wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, but always and only as Jesus is accepted as all and as each.

During a series of meetings for full salvation there sat day after day a man who knew our Lord Jesus Christ as his righteousness, and had known Him by sweet experience for several months, but was not yet experimentally acquainted with Him as his sanctification. He loved the Lord dearly, and loved to proclaim him to others as an atoning, forgiving Saviour, but had not yet received Him by faith as his own present Saviour from sinning, and keeper in trial and temptation. This man listened to the testimony and teaching concerning Christ as the overcoming one in the heart, until he could listen in silence no longer, then began talking both in public and private in this strain: "Ah me! Jesus with me all the time? Jesus dwell in me? Jesus keep me in perfect peace? Jesus give me to

walk in the light as He is in the light, in unbroken fellowship with the Father and the Son, and with the knowledge that the blood of the Son cleanseth me from all unrighteousness ? Me, with my quick temper, strong will, and life-long habits of wrong thinking and acting, so helpless for good, so prone to evil ? Me ? No, not me ; never, till I die. I do not doubt these dear, good people ; I believe they do experience all they say, and I love dearly to hear them, and be with them. I cannot stay away from the meetings ; but this is for them and the like of them, not for me and the like of me. I shall have to struggle on all my days with doubts and darkness, fear and sin, content if I am forgiven, as I always am, when I come as a penitent to the cross. Ah me ! No, I can never look for the abiding of Christ as an overcomer, until death shall set me free from this mortal body." So passed day after day, and so he listened and so he talked, until one day as he sat listening, the word "now" came to have such an emphasis placed upon it as the Holy Spirit, and He alone, can place upon any word which He may choose to make, for the time, the pivot of salvation ; and then as he listened, his heart began to soften and to yield. He sat facing a wall upon which was suspended a cross within a crown wrought in evergreen. His eye rested upon the spaces in the angles of the cross, within the crown, and his imagination filled them with the letters of the word "now."

And in his heart he said, "Yes, Lord, now. Yes, Lord, I do believe that the blood of Jesus does cleanse me, even me, now, from all unrighteousness." Still he listened and still he looked, when lo ! the letters in the crown were transposed to his imagination, and the word became the word of victory, and he said in his heart, "Yes, Lord, won ! Thou hast won the victory in me ; Thou hast conquered in my

heart ; Thou hast given me the faith which I thought never would be mine while in the body. The glory of it all belongs to Thee. The salvation is mine, through faith in Thy precious name." The meeting still went on, and still he listened, and there came a moment when, at the suggestion of the leader, every knee was bowed as if by one impulse,—not a single knee in the assembly refused to bend,—and they sang in a tone low, sweet, solemn, deep, and tender,—

"Lord, I am Thine, entirely Thine,
Purchased and saved by blood divine ;
With full consent Thine I would be,
And own Thy sovereign right in me."

Again and again they repeated these words in tones more tender, more deep, more sweet each time, until they seemed to be the fullest possible expression of feelings inexpressible in every heart ; then after simple words of consecration to the Lord fully and for ever, by the leader in behalf of each and all, they rose from their knees to their feet and sang—

" All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall ;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.".

This also they repeated again and again, each time more heartily than before, until it seemed to be the spontaneous expression of every soul in its action of crowning Him in the kingdom within, as Lord of all. While this was transpiring, the man in whose heart the word of faith *now* had been transposed into the word of victory, *won*, went with all his soul into the consecration, with a sweetness and gladness surpassing all he had ever known before, and then on into the

coronation ; and as the incense of their song rose upon the breath of their faith, his soul went out in un-spoken words like these : " Oh that I had the wings of the morning, that I might fly up through the roof ! Yes, up through the skies, and come into the presence of His glory, and crown Him Lord of all ! Yes, and in my heart of hearts I do now crown him Lord of all, to reign in me, and over me for ever, to subdue and conquer all His enemies and mine."

Do you, as you contemplate this scene, say in your heart, " Would that I might be in such a place and pass through such a change " ? The place was indeed very blessed ; the memory of it will linger, like the aroma of frankincense in the temple, many days in the hearts of those who were there permitted to be in heavenly places in Christ. Yea, and doubtless others than this man's soul were given up to Jesus in the consecration and in the coronation, and did find the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost, thenceforth not only near but fully set up within, and have found it an abiding kingdom founded on the Rock of Ages. But tell me, is it necessary to be in such a place, to pass through such a change ? The place for you is just where you are, not where somebody else has been ; and the time is now, not by-and-by. All places are alike to Jesus. He is able to enthrone Himself in your heart from this moment, and subdue and conquer all His enemies and yours, from this time forward for ever, and will do it, if you will now give up to let Him do it, and accept Him as doing it upon the strength of His word alone. But the change—do you say, " Ah me, how shall I secure the great change in myself which is necessary in order that Christ may reign in me, in the blessedness of His kingdom ? " Change in yourself ! Why, my dear fellow-Christian, you need no such change in yourself as you imagine ;

indeed, you need no change in yourself at all as a preparation for the reign of Christ in you. The thing required is not a change in you, but simply that as you are you give up looking for any change, and take Christ at His word that He is with you and will abide with you always, and will Himself be your salvation as well as your Saviour.

YOUR MISTAKE

is that of looking for an experience. You do not take Christ for all now, because you are looking for some kind of an experience first. Why, beloved, salvation is not by experience, but by faith. Faith does not rest on experience, but on the word of God. Faith is not believing you have an experience, but believing you have Christ. It is not believing that some great change has been wrought in you, but that Jesus is with you and within you, to save you and keep you and purify you unto Himself. Unbelief says, "He is not with me; oh how I wish He was." Faith says, "He is with me." Unbelief says, "Oh that I were so changed that Jesus could take up His abode in me, and dwell with me for ever." Faith says, "All unworthy and unfit as I am, Jesus is with me and does dwell in me, and will abide with me always." What you want is faith, not a change, not feeling, not an experience. Do you say, "Yes, I believe it; oh that I had faith?"

What is the faith you want? Is it a faith which is like the grasp of a giant, so strong that nothing can loosen its hold upon Christ?

No, not at all. It is the faith which accepts the fact, upon the strength of God's word, that Christ has hold of you by the grasp of His own mighty love, mighty to save, and will not let you go; that He takes you just as you are, and takes you now, just where

you are, and will lead you in all the way before you, bear you through every trial and trouble, difficulty and temptation ; that His blood cleanses you from all sin, and His power will overcome all His enemies and yours ; that He will fight your battles for you, and give you henceforth to think and speak in the present tense of the word of faith, now, and have its transposition as the word of victory, won, abiding ever with you. Do you not see your mistake ? You have been looking for the victory before the faith. You would put first into the spaces around the cross the letters w o n, and then afterwards, and as a consequence of this, the letters n o w. This is your idea, and this is the way you have longed to have it ; but this is not God's idea, and it is not the way He will have it. You are to accept Jesus as yours now, and as your all-sufficient Saviour to meet every want of your soul now, and then He will give you in His own way to understand and realise the transposition into the victory WON.

See how it works : unlike the carnal warfare in which victory perches upon the standard of those who fight and conquer, the pivot of victory in the Christian war is surrender, unconditional surrender. He who surrenders, wins. Every surrender to Christ is a victory. The greater the thing at stake, the greater the conquest in the surrender. The instant the citadel of the soul is unconditionally surrendered to Christ, He comes in, takes possession, sets up His banner, turns its guns on His enemies and ours, and not only holds sway within, but puts all enemies to flight. As long as we fight on, in the line of our own leadership, we keep Christ out, and are defeated continually.

What is the victory you are fighting for ? Is it a conscious realisation that Christ saves you from sin, saves you now as an experience, a change ; is it that

Surrender it at once to Christ. Make no demands of Him, but comply with every demand He makes of you ; *surrender to Christ is victory in us.*

AN OFFICER OF HIGH RANK

in the civil service was at the same time an officer in the Church of his choice. He loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and knew that through faith in Him his sins were forgiven. Besides his work as superintendent of the Sunday-school and participant in all the affairs of his own particular congregation, and of the denomination to which it belonged, he was actively engaged in outside union work of the Young Men's Christian Association, and did not hesitate to stand up for Jesus in open-air services as well as within doors, at any time and at whatever cost.

Nevertheless he knew he was not what he ought to be as a follower of Christ. He was led to hear much about a higher Christian life as an experience, but rejected all he heard, with no little disgust. That which touched his heart was the Bible standard confirmed by the sweet example of his own dear mother. He knew he was not what she was, and felt that he ought to be a better man than he was. This conviction pressed upon him, and as he weighed the matter, it weighed upon him more and more until it came to an issue, short, sharp, and decisive.

One day the question came up in his mind, What about your office? Will you let the Lord Jesus Christ decide whether you shall be re-elected or not, when your present term expires? As he pondered this question, it assumed a form still sharper. Will you, when the time comes, stand up in the most public place of your city, and speak for Jesus, if He bids you

do it, even though it shall cost you the loss of the votes that would otherwise re-elect you?

What could be more sharply defined?

This was the turning-point with him. Everything else he had already given up with comparative ease, but here was not the only last thing, but the greatest of all, before him. Like the young man in the gospel, he was very sorrowful, for the prize was no ordinary one, but unlike him, he did not turn away. No, he surrendered; he said, Yes, Lord, if Thou sayest it, all that Thou biddest me I will do. Let me be wholly Thine though it costs me my office. No sooner this than Jesus took possession of the surrendered citadel. Nor was He long in unfolding His sweet presence and exerting His peaceful, powerful, loving sway. Away went the vile habit which had been polluting his breath and holding him in the chains of appetite, and away went appetite with it, never more to trouble him with its cravings, cured at once and supplanted by disgust for that which he had before loved and supposed himself chained to as long as he should live.

Away went pride, vanity, ambition, and the hydra which had annoyed him and held sway in his heart. And in came Jesus, chieftest among ten thousand, altogether lovely, as King of kings and Lord of lords, reigning in meekness and quietness, in love and light and peace and joy; yet filling him with an enthusiasm which went forth in a life of gladness by day, and followed him in dreams of triumph in the night.

Observe, now, all this experience was an after-thing, unsought as such; a great, glad surprise in coming at all, as well as in the form it assumed. That which preceded it and was the key to it all was not the kind of victory you have been yearning for, but defeat rather; an unconditional surrender of the whole matter to Jesus.

Oh, surrender, surrender ; let Jesus have you ; let Him have every question concerning you ; demand nothing of Him ; withhold nothing from Him ; leave all in His hands, and accept what He brings. This do, and do it now ; then the victory will be won.

XVI.

BEHOLD THIS CHILD.

OUR Lord took a child and placed him in the seat of honour at His side, as the true type of greatness. He has set before me a child as a marvellous example, so marvellous that I cannot refrain from letting you share with me the lessons He teaches by her. That this child is a girl, and not a boy, adds to the marvel, and, if you will accept it, tells also of a future greatness of woman's influence for Jesus, which as yet is only in its childhood.

This little girl is now thirteen and a half years of age, and has given, in the eighteen months since she was twelve, eighty-two dollars in money to send the gospel to those who have it not.

“She must be rich,” do you say?

Not so. Look at her! The clothes she has on are her own handiwork. She spun the yarn, wove the cloth, and made them up with her own hands. She is not worth a penny in the world.

“Somebody must have given her the money then;” is that your thought?

No; she earned every cent of it by her own hard work.

“Surely, then, she must live where everything favours her, where employment is plenty and wages are high.”

Nothing of the kind; all the other way. She lives

in a little back-country neighbourhood, where employment is scarce, and wages very low.

"The child certainly, then, must have given her whole time to earning the money. She could not have had anything else to do."

Mistaken again. Her mother is a poor widow, almost blind, and quite lame from a rheumatic affection. There is in the family an aged grandmother, entirely helpless, bowed double with toil and years, whom they support ; the three, grandmother, mother, and daughter, comprise the household, and the child is the mainstay.

They have a little, rough, hill-country farm of twenty acres, which has to be cultivated and kept up, and a cow to be milked and fed. The little girl has therefore on her shoulders the work of a woman in the house, and of a man out-of-doors.

She helped, while yet her mother was able to do more than she can do now, to spin and weave coverlets, carpets, and cloth, to purchase their farm, build their house, maintain the family, and keep out of debt. They owe no man anything but love. With all this she has gone to school in a little district school-house what time she could.

Are you filled with wonder, as to how she could earn so large a sum of money, in so short a time, with so much besides to do ? I am sure I was, and do not yet cease my amazement. The ways in which it was done are indeed more surprising than all the rest. She snatched what time she could after school, to pick berries in their season, and before school in the morning she carried them four miles on foot to a village and sold them. By this alone she gathered thirty dollars in a single season.

She worked for wages in the hay-field, and earned something by that.

Another employment by which she earned money,

I hate to mention, because you will think it *so* hard. Nevertheless it must not be kept back. Moreover, I remember working in the days of my childhood at the same kind of toil, and it really was not half so hard as you might think. It was gathering stones out of the field and laying them up into wall as a fence.

Of all her devices, however, that which shows the child-woman most was this. On their little farm stands one lone little sugar-maple tree. As the spring season drew on, and sugar-making time came, she took a gimlet and bored into the tree, and inserted a cut goose-quill as a tube or "spile," so called, for the sap to run through and drop into a dish which she placed underneath, that she might take it and boil it down in syrup and sugar to sell and get money. The neighbours, seeing this, kindly gave her the use of six other trees on their lands, and tapped them properly for her with augur and spile. Out of the seven sugar maples she drew quite a quantity of golden syrup, and turned it into money for the darling object of her heart.

"Well, she must be large and stout for her age," do you say?

No; she is slight in form, and bent already with toil.

"Poor child!" do you exclaim, "how hard! Oh, how I pity her!"

Yes, indeed, she works hard, but your pity you may keep for those who know not her delights. Jesus has filled her with gladness in Himself such as it never entered the heart of those who do not know Him in His fulness to conceive; and He has taught her His own grand secret, that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

One who knows and loves her well says, "I am sure the world does not contain a happier child than this same hard-working little girl. Look upon her and she

smiles brightly ; give her a word and she laughs out. She is *brimful* of happiness."

One day in the spring she jotted this down in her journal :—

.... " It is warm. We may have a run of sap. I would turn the sweet into the sweeter. Verily, there is nothing *so* sweet to me as to give for missions.

" ' The words of the Lord are spirit and life.
Oh how I want to send them forth ! ' "

Some rhymes written by her, homespun like her garments though they are, yet tell the story. It seems she had been chided for what she was doing, as carrying the thing too far, and so justifies herself to herself in reasoning rhyme. First comes a glance at what is doing in the nations to make Jesus known, and at the bondage of the multitudes who know Him not. Then she ejaculates her deep desire that the work may be carried on, and then asks herself—

" Shall I pray only with my tongue ?
My hands, my feet, must also pray :
Each power of mind must work this way."

Then after accepting the Apostle's injunction to remember those in bondage as bound with them, as rightfully applying to herself, she speaks of the Saviour's example in giving Himself for sinners, and then asks—

" Should I account it much to do,
To earn the dimes, and give them too ?
We spend our pence for vainest things,
Which not one drop of comfort brings :
True joy attends the smallest gift
Bestowed from love to Christ.
Some say I make a great ado ;
It should be great : Christ thought so too ;

He *commande* us to send
His word to earth's remotest end.
If Him we love, we'll Him obey,
And work, and give while it is day;
Nor loiter till the time is past,
And then regret our wrong at last.
Oh, let us wisely fill each hour,
By doing all that's in our power
To show our Saviour's dying love!
Then rest with Him in realms above."

Behold this child ! The Lord sets her in the place of honour that we may see how like Him she is. With her there is no seeking after what she shall eat or drink or wear, but an earnest desire to save those who are lost. In one of her journal jottings she mentions having been to the village to have, as she words it, "my homely picture taken for a dear young friend in Christ," and then she goes on to say—

" My picture cost pains and pence, and is valueless. Christ's likeness is freely bestowed, and is the only valuable possession we can have. Oh to have His image stamped upon me ! Jesus, help me to accept the gift and to bear Thy image to Thy glory in winning others to accept and wear it too ! "

How like to Jesus is this love of souls ! No grasping after worldly treasures for herself, but an eager willingness to do and endure everything to earn money and turn it into the gospel for the lost. No counting over the hardships of her lot, but an unspeakable delight in the privilege of transmuting the sweet into the sweeter, and the stones of the field into the bread of life for famishing men, counting her toil for this her joy, and speaking of it as a duty only when accused of doing too much, thus excusing her love-service on the ground that she ought to render it, and even then hiding herself and her service behind Christ and His cross.

There is no asking, How much must I give of what

I have got? but How much may I earn, all for Jesus?
No asking How much must I do? but What can I
do to get money, not out of men, but out of the woods
and the fields, for the salvation of those for whom my
Saviour laid down His life?

Oh, how far is her questioning removed from that
which we hear so often in the families of those who
have wealth, questioning about the pleasures of the
word, amusements and dress! "Do you think it is
wrong to dance, to dress, to play cards, to attend the
opera or theatre?"

Her pleasures in life—and I can easily believe that
the world does not contain a happier child, and that
she is brimful of real happiness—are beautiful in the
beauties of holiness, and so too is her homespun
apparel. Oh! how beautiful it is, that with her hard
earnings in her hand, the thought never seems to occur
to her, "Would it not be all the Lord requires if I
should give Him a tenth? and then I could buy for
myself with the nine-tenths a dress, a bonnet, boots,
ribbons, or laces." No, but with singleness and glad-
ness of heart she rejoices without a regret, in using it
all to send forth the Word of the Lord.

Behold her! No tithing. All is the Lord's. She
is not even conscious of the wonderful liberty she
enjoys, in perfect freedom from all law in giving but
the law of love, all for Jesus.

A dear and noble brother in the Lord, largely in-
terested in the manufacture of textile fabrics, making
a great deal of money, has just told me that he rejoices
with exceeding joy, in liberation from his old bondage
to the law of a seventh or tenth, by the new freedom
of all for Jesus; but this dear child never knew any
such bondage. Her school is the school of Christ, and
He has first filled her with joy in Himself, and then
heaped it up and pressed it down and made it to over-
flow, by leading her into the glorious privilege of

turning, by the touch of her toil, the sap of the trees, the berries of the woods, and the very stones of the field, into the Word of Life with wings for the nations.

“How came she ever by such a Christ-like mind?”

Well may you ask that. I asked it, too; and the answer has come clear and full; partly out of what she herself has jotted in a journal, which she has been keeping since the day she was twelve; partly out of some things written by her aside from her journal; and partly from the lips of her mother.

This answer shall be given. It touches scenes in the history of the household which are as marvellous and beautiful as the fruit they bear.

But now, first, a few words about the difference between this dear child and my beloved friend the manufacturer, and others, helpful if possible in clearly apprehending the unspeakable privilege of holding all for Jesus, free from all embarrassments whatever.

This dear child needs no capital to carry on her business. Already she has helped her mother to earn, pay for, and furnish their home, and they have it out of debt. She faithfully and lovingly serves as maid and man of all works in keeping “things straight,” in doors and out, and aids at the spinning-wheel and loom in earning daily supplies for the family, and no thought enters her heart that in all this there is hardship for a child like her. Evidently she accepts it all as a blessed service of love from Christ for Him and her beloved mother and grandmother. And in her kind of business, in making money for the Lord, beyond that which goes to sustain and gladden the home, she needs no investments. Her capital is in the bushes and trees and stones, from which she makes large profits and dividends, all of which go to the one stockholder, our Lord Jesus Christ.

My friend the manufacturer, on the other hand, whilst he with the same cheerfulness does all for his

precious family that the Lord would have him do, and holds all he can make as the Lord's for the wants of his own household and for the glory of the kingdom of God, yet requires large investments in mills and other appliances for his kind of business in making money, all for Jesus. He requires no investments, as treasures laid up on earth for himself or his children; his treasures and theirs he lays up in heaven, but he increases capital in so far forth only as it will enable him to do more for the Lord. And from year to year as he takes account of stock, his joy is full in finding always inscribed on everything, All for Jesus, and in seeing that the amount each year put into the blessed channels of the waters of life, to make glad and glorious the City of God, is enlarged.

Other friends I have, very dear ones too, who are differently situated from both of these. They are engaged, each in some special work of the Lord, like that of George Müller in England, in which all they have in the world is immediately invested. Their homes, offices, and all are part and parcel of their special work, and their own support and that of their households come out of it, as all their earnings, as well as the gifts they receive, go into it. This is right for them, and is glorious for the Lord.

But it would be wrong for the child to sell the house and farm if she could, or for the manufacturer to sell his mills, and give the money all to George Müller. It would in the one case be killing the goose that lays the golden egg, and in the other breaking up the very nest. The grand privilege of All for Jesus then is this freedom from the bondage of idolatry to the world in laying up treasures on earth, and from the captivity to its vanities and pleasures, on the one hand, and, on the other, complete emancipation from the bondage of law as to how much must be, or ought to be, given to the Lord, by the perfect liberty of the

principle of love which holds all joyously as the Lord's, and asks, How much may I do, or can I give, for this or that branch of the Lord's work? holding always first that one's own household must be provided for with things honest, and that without owing anything of debt, and also that whatever capital is required in the business to which the Lord calls one must also be held sacred as an investment—All for Jesus.

XVII.

HOW IT CAME TO PASS.

GOD took to Himself three children from one house, all their parents had, in one day. The black fever, that awful scourge, was passing through the region and leaving one or more dead in almost every home, and it fell upon these three little ones, and there were their dead bodies all in the same room together. In the night the dead-cart came and bore them away. The stricken mother, when they were gone, bowed before the Lord, and gave them up to Him; and He turned her thoughts away from the dead-cart on its way to the burial-place, and away from the dark, cold ground where their bodies were to be laid away, within the veil to Himself and the glories of the home to which He had already taken her little trio of loved ones, and she was comforted, nay, filled with joy in the Lord.

Then with all her heart, there in that hour, in that room whence they had been taken home to God, she freely and fully gave up to Him and laid over into His hands, as His own for ever, her unborn babe. And four months after that this child was born.

Happy would it be if every father and mother, from whose homes upon earth the Lord takes their loved ones to His home in heaven, would give them up to Him, and let Him turn their thoughts away from the

empty place in the earthly home, to the newly filled one in the heavenly house, and away from the tomb where the body lies, to the throne where the spirit is with the King. And happy, happy, happy would it be for mothers and children, yea, and for the Church and the world, if every mother would lay over into the hands of the Lord her child, whether born or unborn, to be held and kept and fashioned by Him in His own way, after the image of His own dear Son.

How well the Lord does the work thus committed to Him, we have already in part seen in the case of this little girl. Oh, how Christ-like is her greater delight in giving than in receiving ! and oh, how like Him, too, is she in her love for the lost ! Oh ! who is so worthy to be intrusted with our children, born or unborn, as the Lord ? Who so wise in counsel, so wonderful in working ? Is it not better to give them wholly to Him for ever, than to lend them awhile to the world, in the hope that by-and-by, when the world is worn out, the Lord will turn them to Himself, and make it all right in the end ?

This night-scene is from the mother's own lips, and lets us into the secret of the hidden power by which this little girl has been so quickly and so fully led to accept the beautiful lineaments of Christ.

Side by side with this night-scene must be placed a day-scene, drawn in rhyme by the pen of the little girl herself, which throws a light strong and rich upon the instrument by which the Lord has fashioned her to His own mind.

This scene is in their little cottage home, and of frequent if not of daily occurrence. It is that of the aged grandmother reading the Bible, hour after hour, aloud to herself, while her daughter and granddaughter listen and catch the word for themselves as she reads.

The grandmother is doubled together by toil and years, and utterly helpless, but can see, and though

her articulation is indistinct, she can read aloud. The mother is nearly blind and quite lame, but can work with her hands. The child is busy here and there, quietly moving around in the house-work, and both, while engaged in their affairs, are listening, intent upon what falls from the old lady's lips.

“Long hours she'll read, God's will to find :
Ma can't read much, she's nearly blind :
I needs must toil to keep things straight,
With cautious tread no noise to make.
Grandma reads with broken voice,
Still it makes all our hearts rejoice ;
Her speech has sadly felt Time's power ;
We catch the word, 'cause read before.
Thus God hath us this channel left,
Through which come love and light and rest.”

This is the Church in their house, and this is the way in which the gospel is preached in that Church. Who shall say that there is not as much of heaven in that Church, with its undesigned and formless daily service, as in the most elaborate service of pulpit oratory and artistic music in our marble temples? One of the exquisite touches of this picture is that of the significant glancing look of the mother from the daughter to the Book before the aged grandmother :—

“I know the meaning of that look ;
It tells on whom our help is laid
To bear the ills that sin has made.
Sin is the cause of every ill ;
Christ our help, God's sweet words reveal.
Ma looks all this without a word,
No breath of sound from her is heard.”

With the one Book for their library, and the Holy Comforter as sole guide into all its treasures, this little Church in the home, with its daily Bible-reading, is rich indeed, and one can understand how even this

little girl, in the back hill country, without a church or minister, or the educational advantages of our villages even, should in such an atmosphere be developed and matured for God and heaven more fully at thirteen than many Christians are at threescore and ten.

Another light, quaint but clear, comes out upon this child's character from her own pen, in the form of journal jottings, together with other writings.

At twelve she began to write, and the wonder is, not that her thoughts were clothed in homespun like her person, but that with all she had to do, and only a country district school to attend what time she could, she should be able to write at all. Her first journal entry was her first attempt at writing, and is in fact her own autobiography briefly given :—

“ _____. I am twelve years old to-day. I was born in ___, in the county of ___, and State of ___, on the ___ day of ___, 18___. ”

“ I enjoyed the society of my parents until I was five years old, and then my father died, and we moved to this place where we now live.

“ I never enjoyed many religious privileges except the funerals of our relatives.

“ When I was seven Mr. ___ came and held a series of religious meetings in the school-house, a mile and a quarter from our home, and I attended some. At that time I began to see how great a sinner I was, and how much Jesus loved sinners, to die for them. Ever since that, I have desired to love God with all my heart, and to do all I could for His cause ; but until a year ago I never dared to call myself really a child of God. All I have ever given for missions is twelve dollars ; just one dollar for each year of my life. I must do more ; and I will. But what can I—a mere child—do ?

“ I can write ; and I will. I can write an acrostic

on my grandfather's name, and I will : and some more."

The acrostic does not appear among her writings, though the "some more" does, as we shall presently see. But how distinctly she marks the turning-points in the fashioning process of her life and character !

The time, and the change wrought, when the light of the Lord was let in upon her, showing herself to herself as a sinner, and revealing Christ to her as a Saviour, need no comment.

The time, too, when she received the greater light is no less distinctly marked. Four years, from seven to eleven, passed between the two, but for the clear shining forth of that light in her life and words we must look into her subsequent writings in prose and rhyme.

The wording of the change in this journal entry leaves no room for doubt that at eleven she came into the full assurance of her acceptance with God as her father ; but in her subsequent jottings, as well as other writings, she expresses an assurance also of the presence of Christ with her all the time as her Saviour from sin, and of the fulness of salvation she already enjoys in Him.

Here, for example, are some lines of hers :—

" I cannot comprehend much change,
When I my final heaven shall gain ;
While I am here, I'm wholly blest ;
In every state in Christ there's rest.

" Freely Thou first Thyself didst give,
That all might come to Thee and live ;
Freely Thou giv'st me faith to see,
That from all sin Thou set'st me free.

" No grief is grief with Christ within :
No sin can reign, where Christ doth reign.
Thy perfect righteousness bring in :
Within our hearts do Thou remain."

In the present living union with Christ expressed in these lines we see a depth and wealth of experimental endowment and spiritual teaching away beyond an assurance of present acceptance and of eternal salvation ; it brings a present heaven into her own soul.

How sweetly, in the following entries in her journal, she portrays the present rest in Jesus and the future rest with Him !

“ _____. Quite snowy. Oh, how white and beautiful ! It is the handiwork of my Father. Oh, He will clothe His ransomed ones with far surpassing robes of righteousness ! I feel a sweet trust in God. I believe His every word. He cares for me ; yes, me. Oh, how dear His word is to me ! 'Tis food to my soul. I think I understand it better for realising that its Author is immediately present when I read.

“ How sweet is rest to the weary ! Oh, eternal rest,—to rest endlessly in the presence-chamber of the King of kings ! Rest in Jesus here ; rest with Him there. Only the mortal gets weary : the spirit rests in her Beloved, and drinks in of His fulness. Oh, the consolations of His Holy Spirit ! Oh, the sweetness of His word ! A sense of His actual presence makes it doubly precious. He smiles and enlightens every word.”

The same recognition of the present rest with that of the future is expressed in this :—

“ _____. Thirteen to-day. What cause for gratitude that I have a Christian mother ! Rather that I have a precious Saviour ! He has chosen me, unworthy me, an heir of salvation. He saves me with a present and an eternal salvation. He is my righteousness, and He is also the Author and Finisher of the faith that accepts Him, my present and my everlasting Rest.”

“ _____. A day of rest. Rest ? It is all rest—

rest in Jesus ; every burden, every anxiety, every care. He careth for me. He is all-sufficient. Rest in the fulness of His love here, and rest in His unchanging promise of an endless rest above. O God, accept the gratitude I feel."

The nearness of heaven to her, while yet in the body, is expressed in the following :—

" _____. Sick, all of us, but pain is sweet. God sees it best, and He always shows His beauty so brightly ! I ever feel to say, ' If Thou art ready, I am ; but if I can do anything to honour Thee, I'll gladly stay.' What shall I render to my God for all His benefits ? Indeed, I'll try to honour Him as much as I can. But then this makes matter for more gratitude, for He worketh in me to will and to do. Oh, how I am in debt ! Free grace the past ; free grace ahead ; free grace all around everywhere ! Oh, I'm wholly lost in free grace !"

This debtorship to grace is again expressed in another day of trial :—

" _____. Grandma lame, aunt very poorly, cow sick, and I feel nearly sick in body but well in mind, for God never forsakes those who trust in Him. Oh, what a God we have ! The Author and Finisher of our faith, and then rewards us for accepting the rich, free provisions of His grace ! Oh, I'm lost in trying to contemplate God's love to rebel man ! Oh, how I want to show this love to every soul of man !"

Never having united with the visible Church, she thought to do so, and arranged to go on the day set for it to the village four miles away, but was kept at home by stormy weather, and jotted down the following :—

" _____. Have not been to _____. No doubt it is best. Our Sovereign Ruler is too wise to err. I'm perfectly happy in God's hands. I wish above everything to promote His glory on earth. My portion

for ever ! Oh, how this vibrates the inner shrine of my poor heart !

“Rainy, rainy. May God rain righteousness in my soul ! Have dwelt much on the theme of Christ’s wholly vanquishing sin and Satan for us. Let faith embrace all the gift of God in Christ.”

Self-distrust, with entire confidence in Christ as her own present Saviour from the dominion of sin, and a clear apprehension that it is not according to feeling, but faith, that He saves, is shown by another of these journal jottings :—

“—. Almost as warm as summer this morning. Very cold to-night. The sudden changes are fit emblems of my unstable heart. One hour I feel as though I could do all things ; the next how weak my faith ; yet not discouraged ; my help is laid on One mighty to save ; yes, to save with a present salvation ; to wholly save me from the ruling power of sin.”

“—. Another week has carried its record to the Eternal. Oh, I tremble when I look at self, remembering that ‘without holiness no man can see the Lord.’ But oh, exulting word ! Help is laid on One who is mighty save. Christ’s never-failing righteousness shall cover me, yes, me. Oh, the fulness of Christ ! We may rest in Him. We live in Jesus. He will dwell in us. We may abide in Him. What can separate us from the love of Christ ?”

Distinct answers to prayer are noted in her journal, such as these :—

“—. Could not go to school, the snow is so deep. Commenced a pair of mittens for Mr. Sayre. Have had a manifest answer to prayer to-day.”

Thereupon she breaks forth in the Psalmist’s words, “Bless the Lord, O my soul !” and adds, “the Sovereign Ruler notices a worm. The secret this : we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ,

that ever-speaking blood. ‘I in them, Thou in me : my blood bought their peace.’”

“—. Had the most evident answer to prayer to-day. How can we but have faith ! Jesus is the Truth. He says, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’”

One other day’s jottings must be given, telling of perfect peace in the threefold trial of sickness, loss, and wanton unkindness from those she had never injured :—

“—. ‘They shall be kept in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Thee.’ My mind has dwelt on this peace all day. I have felt very sick, but very happy. How can I but be happy, when God Himself has shown so much interest in my happiness ! My day has been fraught with things calculated to vex and perplex me ; losses and wanton unkindness from those I have never injured, but God has sweetly verified His word. How calm and tranquil I have felt ! ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul !’”

The lines given, evidently the outgoings of her heart, not a poetic fancy, reveal a living union between her and Christ in which she “is so wholly blest,” that she “cannot comprehend much change” when she shall enter the rest above. The journal jottings confirm this, and speak of her perfect rest in Christ ; of instant readiness to go when Christ is ready to have her ; of joyous acquiescence in God’s will ; of faith in Christ as a complete vanquisher of sin and Satan for us ; of entire distrust of herself and perfect confidence in Christ ; of distinct answers to prayer and of being kept in perfect peace : without one word to the contrary of all this during the eighteen months that she has been writing down the experiences and events of her life.

One other fact must also be put with those already given : this little girl never heard one word from

mortal lips about another and deeper Christian experience after that of the new birth, until after that she had herself come into it and been living in it for months.

When she did hear about it from others, and was asked her views, she wrote the following, which quaintly enough she introduced by saying, "I was requested by a mother in Israel to write my views on this subject. Alas, I am but a child. My God, assist."

COMPLETENESS IN CHRIST.

"How did we receive Christ? Was He not 'made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?'

"If we have really put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him, and abide in Him, may we not adopt this language: 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?'

"'God is love.' 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.' If God resides in the soul, sin shall not dwell there. 'I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' 'I will put my law into your heart, and write it on your thoughts; from all your filthiness will I cleanse you.' 'Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people, Thou hast covered all their sins.' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul! who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender

mercies.' 'This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.'

"Is not God our righteous lawgiver? Does He command more than He enables us to perform? He says, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' 'He that spared not His own Son, shall He not with Him freely give us all things?' Without Him 'we can do nothing,' but we can 'do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.' 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' 'He is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to those that ask, than we to give good gifts to our children.' 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.' 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' 'Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.' 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.'

"It was my views that I was asked to write. I view it both a duty and a delight to be 'perfect in every good word and work,' through Christ our Great Perfection, and only in Him: out of Him our best righteousness is as filthy rags. Lord, great in goodness, good in greatness, help.

"Though we're weak, He is mighty;
In His strength alone we go;
If we strive to walk uprightly,
Every grace will He bestow.
It is the Lord in whom we trust;
Of ourselves we're all unfitness;
In our God alone we boast."

Behold this child ! Behold how the Lord has fashioned her in the image of His dear Son ! See in His implicit confidence, His loving obedience, His self-sacrificing love for the lost, His delight in the will of the Father, in short, all the lines of His character in the beauties of holiness, with a perfect knowledge that her completeness is all in Christ, not at all in her own virtues, whether native-born or grace-given, all and only in Jesus.

Behold, too, by what simple means the Lord has thus fashioned her,—simple but grand ! The Bible and the Church in the home, and the Holy Spirit in the heart,—glorious instrumentality ! The Word preached too in the little country school-house, together with the daily discipline of the daily life in the atmosphere of poverty and toil, enriched and hallowed by love. These, the instrumentalities, blessed the work. By the touch of His hand in these it is that the Lord has caused this little girl to become like a burning bush in the desert, in which He dwells, and out of which He shines and speaks. By these it is that He has made her to do yet more than the poor widow who gave all the living that she had into His treasury ; has made her to bring rich revenues to Him out of the nothing possessed by her,—out of her toil, and out of stones, bushes, and trees. Marvellous work, all of God ! To Him be glory in the highest.

XVIII.

THE BURNING BUSH.

THE form in which it pleased the Lord to appear to Moses, when He called him to be the deliverer of His people from bondage, was a beautiful symbol of the Christian in the power of the Spirit,—a burning bush, burning yet not consumed.

The Christian is in himself no more than a bush at best, and a crooked, thorny, gnarled one too: his glory and beauty and power are all in the Lord, who dwells in him. Some of us may be a little more crooked or scrubby than others, in ourselves. Some of you may be more like the palm of the tropics, graceful and flexible; or like the pine of the forest, tall and stately; or like the oak, spreading and strong: but the palm has no heavenly light in itself, and the pine has knots at the heart, and the oak is as stubborn as it is strong. And besides this, I have no doubt that the glory of that bush was all the greater in the eyes of Moses because it was so crooked, so gnarly, so thorny, and yet had in it such a fire. St. Paul says, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." And he says again, concerning Christ, that He "is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." The glory of the bush was Him who dwelt in it, and His glory shone the brighter be-

cause the bush was only a thorn. If any of us are by nature like the palm, or the pine, or the oak, and are glorying in ourselves, our glory will soon go to ashes. Nay, more, if we are glorying in any supposed perfection wrought in us, making us anything in which to glory, it will soon fade away ; or if we are glorying in any of the gifts of God to us, peace, purity, light, love, or power, our glory will die out very quickly : the Lord, the Lord alone, never fades or fails ; and if our glorying is in the Lord Himself, dwelling in us as He dwelt in the bush, and not at all in ourselves, our glory will never cease.

There is a power in the Christian in whom the Lord dwells, wonderfully arresting and strangely attracting to others. They see His brightness, His cheeriness, His shining, and are arrested by it ; and when they see that it does not grow dim, they begin to wonder about it, and say to themselves, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn out." Then when they turn aside to see, their first word is apt to be, "I see that you have something that I have not. What is it ?"

The thing that arrests and attracts them is not that the bush is ablaze, but that it does not burn out. The secret they are after is the undying constancy of the fire in the bush. They understand very well that one may be at times all ablaze with the love of God in the soul, and may occasionally let his light so shine that it shall arrest others, and glorify God : they know this in their own experience, and they look back with delight upon such times in their own lives. But as they look back, there comes up a deep sigh ; and what does that sigh mean ? Ah, its meaning is this : "Oh, that it might be always so with me ! But, alas ! it is not. I wonder if it is so with anybody ?" So when they find one, as they journey along, shining, and shining on and on, it touches this question deep down

in the fountain of sight : Whether there is, or can be, constancy of walking in the light? and if so what the secret of it can be?

Moses must have been all ablaze when he made the great choice of his life, forsook the royal family of Egypt to become a mere Israelite, choosing affliction with the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin, and esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. And when he came among his own people, and took up in their behalf the sword of defence and of deliverance, the fire must have burned vehemently. But alas for him when he had killed the Egyptian, and found that it was known, and that Pharaoh was seeking him to put him to death ; his zeal was suddenly quenched, and thereafter whatever light he had was hidden under a bushel, and under a bed away out in the wilderness. No wonder then that a bush burning, yet not consumed, arrested him, and attracted him. It was just what he himself sighed to be. It is just what thousands of real Christians sigh to be.

The secret of the bush, why it did not burn out, was not long hidden from Moses. It will not be long hidden from any one who turns aside to see the sight, and to learn the secret. As he drew near, a voice came to him out of the bush, calling him by name, "Moses, Moses!" to which he answered saying, "Here am I."

Instantly he knew that the voice did not belong to the bush itself, yet it came to him out of the midst of the bush. If, then, his desire to examine the bush and the fire was intensified, and he was about to approach it more closely, he was instantly checked and awed by the words of authority which followed : "Draw not nigh hither : put off the shoes from off thy feet : for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

The secret of the bush, why it did not burn out, was no longer a secret to Moses ; he understood it now : God was in it. What made that a holy bush ? Its own holiness in itself ? No ; but the holiness of Him who dwelt in it. What made the ground whereon Moses stood holy ground ? Holiness in itself ? No, but the presence there of the Holy One. In what sense is holiness to the Lord inscribed on the Christian in whom God dwells, and out of whom He shines forth with a brightness that never grows dim ? Simply this, that he is set apart to the Lord, and the Lord abides in him. That is, he is wholly given up to the Lord as His abiding-place. In this there is no room for the Christian to glory in himself. He is a gnarly, crooked thorn-bush at the best ; or if he be by nature a palm, a pine, or an oak, he is no better than the thorn ; all the glory of the light belongs to the Lord in the bush ; not a particle of it to the bush itself.

There is in the Christian in whom the Lord dwells a conquering power also, that would be marvellous indeed if it did not all belong to Him who dwelt in the bush, and not to the Christian in himself at all. Moses was conquered before the bush in a few moments. He was virtually conquered when he stopped to look ; for when he saw the bush that it burned and yet was not consumed, the impulse was masterly in him to see why it was. And when the voice came to him out of the midst of the bush, that was kingly, and he obeyed it. When it said, "Draw not nigh hither," he obeyed. And when it said, "Put off thy shoes," he did so. Such a bush is the Christian in whom the Holy One dwells, and by whom he shines and speaks. There is in him the Conquering One, with whom is all power on earth and in heaven. The power is in the Christian, yet does not inhere in him. It is in the Christian because the Conquering

One is in him, and the conquering power inheres in the Conquering One Himself.

Such a bush was James Brainard Taylor to me, for, though dead, the Lord shone out of him upon me, and though in heaven, the Lord spoke out of his living testimony to me as I was in my daily work. The very instant I saw the light of his beautiful life in Christ and Christ in him, it arrested me, attracted me, and virtually conquered me. I knew the power and sweetness of being filled with the love of God ; the joy of knowing Jesus was nothing new to me ; but my life had become one of sighs on account of the inconstancy of the flame in me, and because of my despair that it would ever be otherwise. Not for want of pardon, or assurance, or complete release from fear of death and the judgment ; all that I had. But oh, I was so tired of going over the same ground. So many times I had gone to Jesus and found Him, and thought I would never again lose Him or leave Him, and then the flame had so quickly burnt out ! So the moment I saw in the testimony of Taylor the better thing for which I sighed, my whole soul assented, saying, Yes, Lord ; shoes off ; face in the dust ; everything given up ; self abased—anything in the world, if I may only have the abiding fulness of Jesus.

But just here I made a mistake which is a very frequent one, a mistake that kept me months from receiving Christ to dwell in me and make me like the burning bush. The mistake was this : I thought there must be a great change wrought in me before the Lord could abide in me continually. Or, to put it more accurately, I thought the thing itself was a *change in us* instead of being simply *God in us*. Had I seen at once that all I needed was to have God in me, and that all I had to do to have Him in me was to give myself up to Him and accept Him as given to me, on the strength of His own word, I should have

been saved a long, long course of struggling and striving and a hundred failures. For at last, after I had sought in vain, and in many ways, to secure the great change in myself that I supposed I must have, in a moment it was revealed to me that Christ in me and with me was the real thing I needed, and not the wonderful change in myself which I had been seeking, and that all I had to do was to give myself to Christ, and take Him to myself, and leave the work of purifying me to Him; and when I saw this, my struggles were ended. I gave myself to Jesus, and took Him as my own; or rather, He took me, and took up His abode in me. Then how could it be otherwise than that I should be all ablaze with His love and light? I knew before

“The joy of knowing Jesus,”

but now I began to know the unbroken walk with Christ in the light, for I had Him who is the light abiding in me, and I in Him. Blessed walk! Every step in the light; or if, in any thoughtless moment, a misstep is made, the loving Leader's hand is put forth to draw one back into the light again, and then more steadily, trustfully, lovingly, than ever, the eye is fixed upon Him who is the light, to walk in Him, in Him alone to the end.

There was in that bush a wonderful endowing power too, as well as a power to attract and conquer. No, not in the bush at all, but in Him who dwelt in it.

We are more easily conquered than endowed. Many a Christian will say, Yes, yes, yes, to everything God bids him do in the matter of his own salvation, but will draw back and plead want of gifts when the Lord would send him to speak to others. Moses was ready enough to turn aside to see the great

sight, and to stop and put off the shoes from his feet when bidden by Him who dwelt in the bush ; but when it came to going back into Egypt, whence he had fled a refugee, and taking up the great work he had given up, and becoming a deliverer—the deliverer of his people ; going to the elders of Israel and to the king of Egypt—ah ! that was more than he could undertake. He drew back from it and pled, in the most reasonable way in the world, his lack of eloquence. What ! he, Moses, do all this ? No, he never had the gift of speaking. No, never ; and now that the Lord had spoken to him, and had assured him that He would be with him and with his mouth—even now he had *no consciousness* of having received the gift ; he *felt* just as slow of speech as ever. Oh, Moses, Moses, how like the rest of us wert thou !

Yet the endowment was there, there for Moses. God was the endowment. But Moses only consented to be endowed in part. He took God as his endowment for leadership, but refused Him as his endowment for speech. Oh, Moses, Moses, how patiently, gently, tenderly, thy God dealt with thee ! He offered thee Himself to be thy endowment as His prophet, His priest, His king, a full type of the Son of God in all his offices. Thou didst refuse Him in the two great offices of prophet and priest, and He did not reject thee, but still accepted thee and made thee the ruler of His people. Yes, and He made thee a prophet in spite of thyself ; a prophet greatest of all save only the Son of God Himself, and thou didst assent to it at last, notwithstanding thy slowness of speech. Thine own words show it, when thou didst speak of Christ, saying, “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you *like unto me*. Him shall ye hear in all things.”

Why is it that we ever shrink from anything, however great, to which we are called by Him who dwelt

in the bush? Why do we ever plead lack of the gift for any word or work He lays upon us? Simply because we look at ourselves instead of Him. We want a conscious power in ourselves instead of a promised power in Him. Our real want is to have the Lord Himself, in whom dwells all power with us, to be the excellency of the power for every word and work given us to speak or do. We may be as powerless in ourselves as the bush, but if He dwells in us, and speaks out of the midst of the bush, there will be no lack of power.

Few men since the world began have been stronger in themselves than Moses was. He was a great man, a learned man, a hero; yet when he undertook in his own strength to deliver his people, he very soon abandoned it and fled to the wilderness, and there remained forty years; and there he would have remained, a keeper of his father-in-law's sheep until he died, if God had not called him at the bush. But there he learned the true secret of power: that power belongs to God, and that God with us is our power. And from that bush he went forth trusting alone in Him to whom power belongs; and from that hour everything and everybody gave way before him. Oh, how wonderful the contrast between Moses before the scene, and Moses after the scene at the bush! The contrast between Peter before the day of Pentecost, when he denied his Lord with oaths and curses, afraid of a servant-maid and servant-man, and after Pentecost, when all the threats of the Sanhedrim and high-priest could not move him a hair or silence him a moment, is not more wonderful. Well might it be so, however. He who made the difference before and after is wonderful. Neither Moses nor Peter are anything in themselves to do the work which God alone can do. The poor knotty, gnarly, crooked thorn-bush had as much power to do God's work as the

greatest man that ever lived, and that is just none at all ; but any one, great or small, in whom God dwells, and by whom He works and speaks, has for God's work all the power of God.

How meek, too, it makes one ! How gentle ! How lowly ! How self-sacrificing ! How loving ! Moses was impetuous and imperious. He ran before he was sent ; slew a man against law out of the fire of his own temper ; was offended because his own people did not accept him at once as their deliverer, and then fled in fear for his own life. But when He who dwelt in the bush took possession of him, oh, how changed ! Nothing daunted, yet nothing offended him. Over and over again, when his people rebelled, and God would have destroyed them and would have made of him a great nation, he threw himself into the gap and made up the hedge, preferring to die with his people rather than have them destroyed. Only once during the forty years of amazing provocations did he offend. There is One only who was spotless. But oh how like that One did Moses become through the indwelling of that One in him !

And may we not trace even that one unadvised use of his lips, to the final refusal there at the bush by Moses to give up his lips entirely to the Lord? Whether this be so or not, it will be entirely safe and wonderfully wise for us to yield our lips to the Lord, and not refuse to speak any word, at any time, in any place, to anybody, when He bids us.

XIX.

FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

GLANCE at the map reveals a much nearer and easier route from Egypt to Canaan than one by which the Lord led His people. Left to themselves, Moses and the Israelites never would have gone by the Red Sea, Sinai, the Wilderness of and then back to Sinai, and up around Edom Moab, and across the Jordan. They would, no doubt, have chosen the Gaza route. That leads immediately around the south-eastern bend of the Mediterranean, north into Canaan at the Philistine border, the whole journey could then have been accomplished by them in a few days without the immense difficulties and tedious delays of the other route. It is by that way, no doubt, that the travelling traders whom Joseph was sold by his brethren took him into Egypt, and by which his brethren went and forth, when sent by Jacob their father to Egypt, and by which Jacob finally journeyed with his household to Egypt at the invitation of Joseph the king.

We know that the eunuch, treasurer of Queen Candace, was returning in his chariot along that route, from Jerusalem through Egypt into Ethiopia, when he was sent to preach Christ unto him, and that

travellers a hundred to one journeyed back and forth between Egypt and Canaan by that way.

Why then did the Lord choose the way of the Red Sea, Sinai, the Wilderness, and the Jordan?

There were two excellent reasons for His choice. One was to prevent the return of His people into Egypt, and the other was to prepare them to conquer Canaan, and to dwell in it for ever.

TO PREVENT THEIR RETURN INTO EGYPT.

They needed not only the thorough break which actually occurred between them and the Egyptians when they went out, but also a Red Sea experience to separate them from Egypt. As it was, their hearts turned back into Egypt every time they met any new difficulty in the way; and when at the end of the first year they came to Kadesh-Barnea, with nothing between them and the land but an invisible line, they, instead of stepping over and taking possession, stopped, and sent over spies; and then at the report of the spies their hearts failed them; and they rebelled, and determined to kill Moses and Aaron, put other leaders in their place, and go back again into Egypt; and then the Lord would have destroyed them, but for the interposition of Moses and Aaron; and as it was, He sentenced them to life in the Wilderness until all the unbelieving ones should die off.

From these facts we see the justness of the reason given by the Lord Himself for not leading them by the Gaza route, though, as He says, "that was near;" for, said He, "lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return into Egypt."

Many a time have I wondered why I was led out of Satan's bondage into the liberty of the gospel by

the long, roundabout, hard way, and not directly by the short easy way. Here, however, is the mirror of it, and here is the reason for it, one reason at least, though not the only one.

Ah! yes, they needed a Red Sea and a terrible wilderness and a Jordan between them and Egypt, to keep them from repenting and returning, not one whit more than I did. The world was wonderfully attractive to me. Self-indulgence in Egypt, over against enduring hardness as a good soldier of Christ, looked amazingly fascinating. Others may not need these experiences as a gulf between them and the world, but I am sure I did; and I thank God on this account for the way, and for *all* the way in which He has led me.

TO PREPARE THEM TO DWELL IN THE LAND.

The Lord had for His people a glory in store of which they had no conception when He called them out of Egypt, and that was to make them what He made Moses to them, a burning bush in the wilderness. They were to become the light of the world, a candle on its candlestick, a city set on a hill which cannot be hid. The Lord was to make them among the nations, a bush aflame with His own presence, a tabernacle covered and filled with His glory, so that all the world should, when they looked up, turn aside to see this great sight. He was to make them as a nation, just what He makes every one of His children who will receive the pentecostal gift, His own temple amongst men. Therefore it was that the glory of Egypt must be abased and turned into corruption in the sight of Israel, and the glory of God shown forth by judgments and wonders, which should take all the glitter out of Egypt, and put a halo round the name of God for ever.

Therefore, too, the passover must be observed. The blood of the Lamb must be seen to be the price of their redemption, and the token of their salvation, and the flesh of the Lamb must be shown to be their sustenance all the journey through to their journey's end, yea, and for ever. It was to be for ever upon the lintel and the posts of their doors, and upon their hands, and upon their brow as the token ever kept in front, that they were redeemed by the precious blood as of a lamb that was slain from before the foundation of the world, but who was to reign for ever and ever in the midst of the throne in their hearts.

Therefore it was that they were baptized unto Moses in the sea ; and ate of the manna in the Wilderness, and drank of the Rock, Christ ; and were brought under the power of the law at Sinai ; and were taught and trained in the worship and fellowship of God in connection with the tabernacle, and were led about and humbled, and made hungry ; and led at last through the conquests of Sihon and Og, with their cities and riches, before being led into the land ; and then were brought to the Jordan at the precise time in all the year when it overflows its banks, and taken across it upon its dry bed while its waters above stood on a heap, and flowed back far away up the valley.

All this, and all the judgments and mercies by the way, were necessary to destroy in the heart of the nation their inbred self-life, self-indulgence, self-will, self-esteem, self-righteousness, self-dependence, self-complacency, and to bring them to accept the Lord as their life, and power, and strength, and glory.

THE USUAL COURSE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

In all this I see my own experience wonderfully foreshown. Looking back over all the way in which the Lord has led me I see at every step two things, my own shame and God's glory. When I look at my part in it I see murmurs and fears and rebellions, bitter complaints, and shameful wanderings, all the way till I reached the land ; but when I look at God's part I see the whole route from Egypt to Canaan ablaze with His glory, His patience, forbearance, gentleness, kindness, faithfulness, and love. Yes, and in the land He is all the glory of it. Oh ! how it shines. Oh ! how my heart melts at the thought of it. Yes, I see the wondrous love of God in the blood of the Lamb, upon the forefront of all ; and I see the power of the Lamb in the parting of the waters of darkness at the Red Sea ; and I see the Bread of Life, angels' food, in the manna by the way : and I see the Angel of Life in the pillars of cloud and of fire by which I was led and protected on the journey ; and I see my glorious Schoolmaster, Christ in the law, by which He led me to Himself, my glorious Bridegroom ; and I see my glorious wedlock with Him entered into, in the passage of the Jordan into the land at last.

Yes, and from all I see and hear from others I see that this, too, is the usual course of Christian experience. If in any case, and alas, the cases are many, the Jordan has not been reached yet, and they are saying to themselves it never will be reached until death, this simply shows that the Lord has not yet brought them thus far. And if they speak harshly, censoriously of others who are in the land, I can heartily say, with the kindly coloured woman who heard such things, "The Lord He habent teached 'em yet." No, but He will. They will yet see and know the truth for themselves.

Here let me say, it seems to me that there are at this time an unusual number, especially in our own country, who have been brought along out of the stand-still position in the Wilderness of Sin, and are in the line of successive victories still, on the Bashan side of the Jordan. They are hard at work subduing Sihon and Og, and this work they are more than half inclined to exalt in the place of the Saviour. Their cry is, "Go to work and your sins will cease to trouble you." Their panacea for all spiritual ailments is work, and their hope for the salvation of men is work, and the glory of their life is work. But the Lord will soon bring them face to face with the Jordan in its flood, and there He will teach them that it is not in man's work, but in God's power, that all virtue and all hope is to be found. Then they too will take the wedding ring presented by the Bridegroom, and step with Him to the altar and be made one with Him for ever. They have sprinkled their frontlets with the blood of the Lamb; they have been gloriously brought through the Red Sea; they have passed under the schooling of the law; they have risen from the position of a truce with the enemy into which they fell back from Kadesh-Barnea, and they are eagerly working away now in Bashan; and I am sure they will be soon brought up at the Jordan, and will there be taught the grand secret of perpetual conquest by abiding union with Him who is the Overcoming One. This is the usual course of Christian experience. There are, however,

UNUSUAL WAYS.

The Lord has various routes, but not a single rut, for His people.

The Gaza way is not a wholly untravelled one by those whom the Lord leads from Egypt to Canaan.

Such records as those of Isaac among the patriarchs,

and of Samuel and John the Baptist among the prophets, have their counterpart amongst Christians in every age.—And yet these are the few among the many. Of John the Baptist we are told that he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth, and being filled with the Holy Ghost is coming into the land, being wedded to Christ, receiving the pentecostal gift. Of Samuel we know that while yet a child the Lord made him a great prophet, and allowed none of his words to fall to the ground. Isaac's life, too, is free from the decisive Red Sea struggle which we see in Jacob's experience at Bethel, and from the Jordan wrestling of Jacob at Peniel, where his name ceased to be Jacob and became Israel, prince of God, with power for the conquering life: free, too, from such crises as we see in the life of his father, Abraham; yet the measure of his faith, when tried side by side with that of his father, lacked nothing. In Abraham's great trial Isaac's faith went with him. It is written, "They went on both of them together." If Abraham carried the fire and the knife, Isaac carried the faggots and was the lamb for the sacrifice. He knew it, too, yet no murmur escaped his lips. He must have known it when his father bound him, and raised the knife to slay him. Yes, he knew it all the while, yet no movement of resistance was made by him. His will went with his father's will in the will of God; and if his father was a beautiful type of the Father, in the great sacrifice of the Son, so was Isaac also of the Son, in the offering up of himself.

These, however, are rare examples, unusual gems in the sacred history, more Christ-like than the rest of us in this very thing, that they never seem to have been wedded to the world or set upon having their own way, but to have been in union with the Lord from birth.

Others there are who have to be led out of Egypt by the Red Sea, but who, when brought to Kadesh-

Barnea, do not back down before the giants in the land, but step over and go in and possess the land, without an intervening truce in the wilderness, with its hungerings and humblings.

These, however, are not the many, but the few; enough to exemplify the fact that the Lord has various ways for his people.

Two things only are essential: the escape from Egypt, and the entrance into the land. These secured, it matters little about the experiences in the way, whether or not they be signal. To be out of Egypt was the great thing for Israel before their deliverance, and to be in the land was the great thing when they were in the Wilderness. To be out from under Satan's yoke of bondage to the world is the first great thing for him who would be saved; and to be in Christ in perfect liberty and peace is the great thing for the Christian. Particular experiences are very pleasant to think of, but they are not essential to salvation. Let no one hesitate a moment to trust Christ entirely because he has not had this or that experience corresponding to what is usual amongst his fellow-Christians. Nor let any one judge his fellow-Christian because the Lord has not led him to pass through the Red Sea, or the Jordan, by an experience signal as his own. There are some of us who need breaking down and breaking up more signally than others. These signal experiences are evidences of signal resistances.

EVERY VICTORY IS BY SURRENDER.

Surrender to whom? To the enemy? No, but to Christ. Surrender, if it be to the enemy, is defeat; if to Christ, it is victory. Our part in this whole matter, from first to last, is that of resistance until we yield, and yielding is surrender; and when we have surrendered to Him, then our part is to live on in perpetual

surrender to Him. Even in glory we are, as it were, the captives of love, the glorified, redeemed ones, whose glory is all in their Redeemer. To give up and let all go into the hands of Christ is victory. This was the victory of Moses when he gave up Egypt, and chose the afflictions of the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin. And this was his victory again at the bush, when he yielded to Him who dwelt in it. So was it the victory of Israel in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and at the Jordan. On the other hand, to give up and let all go into the hands of the enemy is defeat. This was the defeat of Moses when he fled to the Wilderness, and of Israel when, for fear of the giants, they refused to go on into the land of Kadesh-Barnea. And this is the defeat in which thousands of Christians are living to-day who are saying to themselves, "Ah! my temper, or temperament; ah! my besetting sins and untoward circumstances. I can never overcome them in this world."

Yet what is there between them and the overcoming power? Nothing but their own unbelief or unwillingness to surrender to Christ. Let them give up, and let all go into the hands of the Overcoming One, and the conquering position is theirs.

XX.

ACROSS THE JORDAN.

MOSES DEAD.

THE type would have been imperfect if the Lord had not taken away Moses, and put Joshua in the lead of His people before they entered the Promised Land.

That is one of the things He always does with every one of His children in bringing them into rest. Moses must die. He represents the law. Joshua must be put in his place. He represents grace. The name Joshua is identified with Jesus, and means Saviour. The law is no saviour. It shows us our need of salvation, but never bestows it upon us. It can bring us to the brink of the Jordan, but it cannot take us over into the land. It can take us up to the top of Mount Nebo, and show us the goodly land of milk and honey, oil and wine, with its vine-clad hills and valleys of green, but there it must die, and God must bury it.

Grace alone can open the waters before us, and lead us over and put us in possession of the unspeakable things God has in store for us. The law can make us feel as deeply as the man under the law in the seventh of Romans, what *we* ought to be and what *we* ought to do, and what *we* ought not to be and ought not to do. But the gospel alone can lead us into the know-

ledge of what Christ is for us, and to us, and this is just the difference between the two.

The law fixes our thoughts on ourselves ; the gospel fills us with Christ. Hence the law must die out, that Christ may live in us. This is what happens on the death-bed in so many instances.

All hope of making one's self what one ought to be to meet the requirements of the law is given up, and our case is given up to Jesus entirely, and immediately there, on the death-bed, one is led into perfect rest in Christ, with a sweet foretaste of the rest above.

And this is just what takes place long before the time of death in those who come to a like position of mind, and give themselves wholly over into the hands of Jesus, to be led by Him.

Death was the Jordan to those Israelites who, through unbelief, gave up all hope of taking possession of Canaan while they lived, and so fell back from Kadesh-Barnea into the Wilderness of Sin, and heaven was their rest ; but their children crossed the Jordan, and came into the rest which remained for them long, long before they died. These two classes represent the two classes of Christians, those who look for no deliverance until death, and those who accept deliverance long before death.

SIHON AND OG DEAD.

The Lord wants us to enter the land leaving no enemies in the rear. Sihon and Og, if left in power in their strongholds, could have struck heavy blows against Israel from their side in aid of the inhabitants of the land on the other side, and they could have given refuge to whole armies in the giant cities of Bashan.

But dead they could strike no blows, and their

cities taken and occupied by Israelites were no places of security for their foes.

Prominent sins such as come squarely out in the Christian's pathway when he sets his face for the path of deliverance, must be put to death before he can cross the Jordan. Moreover, God often gives those He is leading out specific victories over special things in the way, not merely to get those things out of the way, but as foretastes of conquest before He brings them through into the land, and puts them in full possession of the conquering life.

Many a one can point to specific victories in which, through simple faith in Jesus, particular besetments have been killed as dead as Og and Sihon ; not merely brought under, but put to death. And this is a great encouragement to look for the general victory and for the key to a life of continued conquest.

THE LAND SPIED OUT.

As at Kadesh-Barnea, so again at the Jordan, spies were sent over into the land and returned again to camp. The last fared worse than the first set, brought no fruits back, and had to escape for their own lives out of the land. Yet they saw the cities and the country, and were charmed and had no fear but that God would give it to Israel according to His promise.

And the people were not alarmed by their report, but accepted it and were ready to go forward in the face of all the giants and strongholds of the land.

THE PEOPLE SURRENDERED.

That is, they gave all up to return as their fathers had done, and leave the land in possession of their enemies ; but they gave all up to the Lord to let Him lead them wherever He would, and to do with them

whatever He pleased, and to do themselves whatever He should make known to them as His will.

The surrender was unconditional; their words to Joshua were, "All that thou commandest us we will do, and wheresoever thou sendest us we will go."

THE PROMISE ACCEPTED.

The Lord gave to Joshua as head of the people a promise covering the whole land, "from the wilderness on the south to Lebanon on the north, and from the Euphrates on the east unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun," and said, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. There shall not a man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage."

With the promise the Lord emphasized the encouragement to accept it and stand in it by repeating it a second, yea, and a third time, showing that He knew where the failure would come if it should come.

Unbelief is the great weakness as well as the great sin. The one sin of which the Comforter reproves the whole world is that of unbelief, "of sin because they believe not on me," said our Saviour. And the one weakness at the fountain head of failure is unbelief. Israel failed of the rest at Kadesh-Barnea through unbelief, and by faith they entered in across the Jordan. Many a one has said with Israel, all that thou commandest us we will do, and wheresoever thou sendest us we will go, and made the surrender unconditional to do the will of God, but has come short of accepting the promise, and venturing all upon it, and so has failed.

Not so Israel at the Jordan. They reiterated the

words of encouragement, in the word of the Lord to Joshua, and put themselves under pledges of death to all who should not obey, saying, "Only be strong and of a good courage."

THE WAY UNKNOWN TO THE PEOPLE.

Surrendered was the people ere to the Lord, and trustful in Him, He took good care that they should not go forward in any way of their own.

He always leads us by a way we know not. Our failures come more frequently from thinking that we know the way before He has shown it to us, than from an unwillingness to walk in the way when He makes it known to us.

The Lord put the ark in the forefront at the head of the column to guide them, and to make sure that they should not rush blindly on, and fail to discern the way He was showing them. He put the space of two thousand cubits between the ark and the people, and charged them, saying, "Come not near unto it that ye may know the way ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore."

Few things are more frequent in our work of guiding others into full trust than the overstepping eagerness of those who do not wait to have the way shown to them, but rush on in some way of their own, and so fail of the Lord's way.

Deliberate following, with one's eyes not fixed on himself, but on Jesus; not turning this way and that, but steadily watching his Leader, is indispensable to safe conduct in the way.

THE WATERS NOT CUT OFF BEFOREHAND.

The promise was that the waters of the Jordan should be cut off when they came where their feet touched the brim.

They were to go deliberately forward out of their camp onward to the water's edge, while the river in its annual time of swelling still rolled on as if to roll on for ever ; they were to march to the brink precisely as they would have done if the waters had been cut off, and the bottom laid bare for them to march over it, and when they came to the brim of the waters and the priests with the ark dipped their feet in the waters, then were they to be cut off, and then were they cut off, and the glorious power of their Leader was seen.

Here again is a mirror of numerous failures.

Instead of going deliberately forward in the face of unremoved difficulties, trusting in the Lord to cut off the waters when they are reached, the eye is fixed on the waters, and not on the Leader ; and though the Leader may move forward, He is not followed because the eye is not upon Him as He moved, but upon the waters not cut off.

In this way the waters never would be reached and never would be cut off. The old adage, that "a bridge cannot be passed until you come to it," is in point.

Our trust, to be good for anything, must be placed, not upon already removed difficulties, but upon the Lord, who can remove them when reached.

If we wait to see the waters of difficulty cut off before we set out, we shall never come into the land ; but if we are strong in the Lord and of a good courage, and venture forward, stepping out on the strength of His word, then shall we find what Israel did, that the waters are cut off and do flow back and stand as an heap and cannot overflow us.

The deeper, and broader, and higher they are, the greater the glory will be to our God, and the greater the joy will be to our souls.

THE DOUBLE SET OF MEMORIAL STONES.

That was the grave of the old wilderness life of Israel, that trough in the Jordan, and from thence they went up out of the tomb in the power of a conquering life in the land. The Lord therefore kept His ark standing in the midst of the river-bed until all the people came down to it and passed up from it, and he caused twelve men, representatives of the twelve tribes, to set up twelve stones, one for each tribe, there in the river-bed, as the tombstones of their unbelief, and to take out thence twelve stones into the land and set them up as the memorial of their conquering life upon which they now entered; as if He had said unto them, as St. Paul did to the Romans, "Reckon yourselves, therefore, dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and set up added gravestones *in memoriam* of yourselves as dead to your self-life and also others in token of your resurrection to God in Christ Jesus by faith in His name.

Oh! how thoroughly the Lord led them step by step when they gave themselves up to His leadership. First to surrender themselves entirely to obey and to follow Him in a way they knew not, and to accept His word of promise, while yet every difficulty remained in the way; then to go forward deliberately, looking to Him alone, sure that they were following Him in the way He led them; to go right on up to the waters rolling on in full tide; then to go down under the overhanging wall of water, and there attend their own funeral and set up their own gravestones in the middle of the river; and then to take from the same spot the memorial stones of a life now separated wholly to God and given up to his leadership for ever, and set them up in the land to be seen by all future generations.

THE REPROACH OF EGYPT ROLLED BACK.

No sooner were the people encamped in the land than the old symbol of the cutting of the flesh—circumcision—was renewed; and that with a special significance as the token of an entire separation from the old life in Egypt.

Oh, how long the process had been! How patiently the Lord had led them! How wisely He had dealt with them! How wonderfully He had taught them! How gloriously he had wrought His wonders for them in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the Wilderness, and now at the Jordan! And now they were in the land, so first of all He had them roll off the reproach of Egypt by the sign of circumcision.

This to them was also a sharp reminder that in themselves dwelt no good thing, that whatever else the Lord had done for them, He had not hallowed them in themselves, but had hallowed Himself in them, and that their goodness was all in their Saviour, and not in themselves at all.

THE FRONTLET TOKEN RENEWED.

One thing more remained to be done. The Pass-over must be kept. The blood of the lamb must be sprinkled anew upon doorpost and lintel, in token that He who redeemed them by His blood also preserved them by His power; and the flesh of the lamb must be eaten in recognition of the fact that He who was their life and sustenance in the escape from their bondage would be the same in their conquering career upon which they were now fully to enter. Without the blood of the Lamb there could be no redemption from the bondage of Satan, and without the blood of the Lamb there could be no conquering power.

It is the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony by which those in white robes before the throne overcame.

There is no overcoming power but that which is in the Lamb that was slain from before the foundation of the world to redeem us to God, and that is ours only by faith. Wherefore it is the frontlet token to be kept in our brow for ever and ever.

As the altar was in front of the Tabernacle and Temple, and must be passed in getting to the laver, and to the holy place, and to the Holy of Holies, so must the slain Lamb of God be ever before us in the beginning, middle, and ending of every step of progress and of every stage of life.

XXI.

IN THE LAND.

ONE day a dear brother came to me saying, "I am puzzled. I wonder if you can help me."

"What is the puzzle?"

"My own mistakes and imperfections."

"What is there to puzzle you in these?"

"I do not see how to reconcile them with the idea of completeness in Christ which I have accepted by faith."

I was about to try and disentangle the skein for him, but we were interrupted, and had no opportunity for further conversation until the next day. There were meetings in progress, and in one of these I spoke of the history of Israel as a type of the Christian life in its various stages, but followed out the analogy no further than the crossing of the Jordan; so, when on the following day an opportunity occurred, my friend came with another puzzle. Said he, "What do you make of the life of Israel in the land? I can see my own escape from the bondage of Satan in their deliverance from Egypt, and my own life of wanderings, now full of joy, now of sorrow, now of light, now of darkness, sometimes in God's will, sometimes in my own, in their life in the wilderness; and I can see my entrance into rest by faith in Jesus in their entrance into the land. So far all is plain; but now comes the

puzzle. What do you do with all their blunders and imperfections after they were in the land? There is the sin of Achan, the defeat before Ai, and the entanglement with the Gibeonites, and the rest. How do they accord with the Christian life in full union with Jesus?"

This brought us to the very point where we were when broken off in our conversation the previous day. The two puzzles were perfectly parallel. Thus—

The mistakes and imperfections of the Christian in full trust.

The mistakes and imperfections of Israel in the land.

Plainly the two puzzles are one, and their solution one. My beloved brother had made the most natural mistake in the world. He had apprehended his own completeness in Christ, and the deliverance was so great from his previous deep sense of his incompleteness, that he came very naturally to the conclusion that he was now complete in *himself* through faith in Christ. But having a *perfect Saviour* and being perfect *one's self* are two very different things.

When Israel crossed the Jordan, they rolled off the reproach of Egypt behind them, and rose above the fear of Canaan before them; but it did not follow that the sons of Anak were all dead, and their high-walled cities laid flat, because Israel was raised above the fear of them.

The conquest was assured to them, and they had accepted it as certainly to be given them; and God had sealed to them His promise by opening to them a way through the Jordan.

He told them that the whole land was theirs, and that every place whereon they should set the soles of their feet should be possessed by them, and not a man should be able to stand before them all the days of their life. And they believed Him, and went forward into the land, and He cut off the waters

before them, and led them through dry-shod into the land.

They were conquerors and more than conquerors already by faith ; they had an abundant entrance ministered unto them into their earthly Canaan, but they had not yet slain a single one of the giants of the land, or taken a single city.

The whole land was theirs, and they were in it ; but every city and every king had to be conquered in detail.

They were also in possession of the key to a perfected conquest, yet their conquest was not even begun, much less finished. They had simply come into the conquering position.

That is precisely what the Christian comes into when he comes out of the wilderness wanderings into full and abiding union with Jesus : he has come into the conquering position ; his is a conquering life begun, not a conquest completed. He is in Christ, the Conquering One, and in Him he is complete for the conquest ; a very different thing from either being complete in himself, or having a completed conquest.

This then is the one solution of the two puzzles.

A CONQUERING LIFE BEGUN.

Viewed in this light we shall easily understand the mistakes and imperfections of life in the land.

In the very outset we see at a glance that they are mistakes and imperfections of life *in* the land, not out of it.

They do not belong at all to the wilderness life—the life of truce with our enemies, leaving them in peaceable possession of the land, while we through unbelief are afraid to face them—not a bit of it.

Much less do they belong to the Egyptian slave life under the yoke of Satan.

And we see further that they all belong to a conquering life, not to a life of defeat. We run on into them through eagerness to go forward, and do not fall back into them through fear of trying to advance.

Take, for example, the sin of Achan ; that never could have been committed except in the moment of victory. In the time of defeat there is nothing to steal.

Spoils only are taken in the hour of conquest. Achan says in his confession, "When I saw among the spoils a Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them and took them, and behold they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent."

"When I saw among the spoils." Yes, such things are seen only among spoils, and spoils belong only to the hour of victory. Ah ! when a glorious victory has been won, and rich spoils have been taken all of which belong to the Lord, happy for us if then we do not plume ourselves with vanity as foolish as a Babylonish garment, even if we do not dare to put it on in the sight of others ; happy for us if we do not covet and take too, even if we have to hide it in our own hearts, or in our own tents the silver and the gold to enrich ourselves in our own esteem. Happy for us too if God searches it out and brings it out to light for us, and we confess it, and put it to death, and so make the valley of Achor a door of hope, and not lose our conquering position, but become stronger in the Lord than before. Or take, for example, the defeat before Ai ; that was a temporary defeat in a career of conquest.

The warriors of Ai never defeated the Israelites while in the wilderness. How could they ? They were not before Ai to be defeated until they had come into the land, and were in their victorious progress.

That defeat was a mere eddy in the broad sweep of the current of conquest.

And how came they to suffer even this little defeat? Simply through their eagerness of victory. Instead of stopping to ask counsel of the Lord, they took it into their own hands to go against Ai.

If they had asked the Lord, He would have said, "No, go not up, stir not one step, till the sin of Achan is exposed and cleansed." But going up unadvisedly in their own eager counsel the Lord gave them defeat instead of victory.

And who among us who have entered upon the conquering life have not done this same thing, and suffered a like defeat?

It is so natural for us in attempting the conquest of some petty habit, or difficulty, or besetment, to go against it in the old way by resolutions and struggles and agonizing cries unto God, instead of taking it right to Christ and laying it over upon Him. So also in plans for raising money or of winning souls to Jesus, we are as prone to take counsel of our own hearts or of each other, and not of God, and begin to work the matter up after the human fashion, instead of going first to the Lord and then following to the letter the counsel He gives. No wonder, therefore, that we suffer defeat in every instance until we are taught better, and learn to use the key of victory—faith, which God has put into our hearts.

The Gibeonite entanglement was also an incident of Israel's victorious progress. The Gibeonites became greatly alarmed for their safety, and although their city was a royal one, very great and very strong, yet they were so overawed by the conquests of Israel that they concluded to try cunning rather than courage, and by their old clouted shoes, and old worn-out clothing, and rent bottles, and lying words they managed to blind the Israelites and entangle them

in an alliance under supposition that they were from another country far away, and not inhabitants of the land at all.

And Israel was led into this alliance how? Simply through their old process of leaning to their own understanding; they forgot for the time their *key*, and therefore for the time they failed of opening the door and letting the light in upon the lies of the Gibeonites.

Precisely what has happened to most of us who are in the conquering life. Satan comes and puts on, oh, such specious appearances! dresses up his deceptions in such a way that we do not see through them at all; and so sure as we do not use our key, and fly to Christ for counsel, the wicked one has us entangled in some Gibeonite compromise with things that ought not to be allowed to live a moment.

PROGRESS OF THE CONQUEST.

Our conquest proceeds step by step, and the key must be used at every step, or we are sure to slip and fall, and have the step to take over again, or else to entangle ourselves in compromises with the Canaanites and leave them to spring up and become "thorns in our sides and pricks in our eyes."

Extermination to every enemy, to every Canaanite, is God's requirement and our safety.

The old self-life must be put to death as soon as it appears in any form whatever, by turning it over to Christ. And Christ, the true Israel, Prince of God, must be put in possession in every province of the soul and in every interest of our being. That is to say, we must let Him rule in us; let Him have us; cease from self, whether it be self-seeking, self-justifying, self-helping, self-delivering, self-keeping, self-commanding, or self in any other form, and seek Christ; trust Christ, glory in Christ, and let Him be all in all.

There is a wonderful meaning in the severities of the law. The sabbath-breaker must be stoned to death. That which breaks our rest in Jesus, our sabbath of the soul, must die ; we must turn it over to the true Israel, to be judged and stoned to death. Achan and all his household must die ; they must be judged by Israel and put to death. The conquest cannot proceed one step until it is done.

Why ? Because Achan, when he saw a stylish garment which the Lord had devoted to destruction, and the silver and gold which the Lord had set apart for Himself, he coveted and took them, and hid them in his tent where his family were accessory to his crime.

The conquest could never go forward if things accursed of God were to be coveted and kept, and covered up by his people, and if things consecrated to God were to be coveted and appropriated to their own selfish purposes.

Just as Ananias and Sapphira must die by the judgment of God, so must Achan and his family be judged and put to death.

King Saul must lose his kingdom, because that which God had devoted to destruction he saved for himself.

There was great meaning in the lowing of the sheep and cattle as it sounded in the ears of Samuel. And the meaning of all this to us is, *death to every doomed thing*, death to vanity, pride, covetousness, ambition, temper, impatience, fear, doubt, everything that shuts Christ out from the soul, or limits his sway in the soul, each and all as they come up, one by one must be turned over to Christ to be judged and put to death. There must be no compromises whatever. To put them under is not enough, death is their doom. God demands it, and Christ will accomplish it if we will let Him.

The conquest must begin with the head. Joshua must give up his leadership into the hands of the real Captain of the Lord's host. The very first victory must be gained by the strategy not of man, but of God. The walls of Jericho are not to be broken through by battering rams, or scaled by ladders of man's invention; but they are to fall flat at the blast of the bugle of faith, tried and found obedient seven days in succession, and seven times the seventh day.

The head must first be given up to the Lord, or the heart will never be taken possession of by Him.

The defeat before Ai, and the alliance with the Gibeonites, came from following their own heads, and not submitting the matter first and entirely to the Lord. Let us be beheaded, and let Christ be our head, and He will soon set the heart right.

When we are once fairly, and fully, and practically given up to the Lord, and cease to hinder Him by our headiness, He will lead us rapidly on from conquest to conquest. He led Israel from victory to victory, and from city to city, so rapidly, notwithstanding the delays occasioned by their mistakes, that in an almost incredibly short space of time thirty and one kings were smitten before them, and their cities and lands were permanently captured and occupied.

This too was a true symbol of the grander and more glorious victories gained by the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ after they entered into the land of promise, into the power of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; a true symbol of the still grander and more glorious conquests to be made in the days yet to come, when the people of God, the conquering Church, shall put on her beautiful garments, her conquering robes, and come forth fair as the moon, fair only in the sun's light, clear as the sun, covered and flooded with his effulgence, and terrible to his enemies in the power of the Spirit, as an army with banners.

One thing in the conquering position of Israel in the land has a special and wonderfully precious significance for us.

THEIR CAPTAIN WAS INVISIBLE.

In the wilderness He was visible ; in the land He was unseen.

In the transition from the wilderness position to their position in the land there was a transition from sight to faith. The pillar of cloud went before them in every movement while they remained in the wilderness ; when it rose up they struck tent, when it settled down they pitched tent, where it led they followed, where it abode there they remained until it again lifted up. But when they entered into the land, where then was the pillar of cloud ? We see no more of it on the hither side of Jordan. Why ? Was He who dwelt in the cloud not any more with His people ? He had forsaken them altogether ? Nay, verily, He was with them. He was *in* them. He had only come nearer. In them He was thenceforth to be their guide, their defence, their strength, their glory. This was that which brought them into the conquering position, and gave them their conquering power. Without this they would have been as weak as they had been in the wilderness forty years before.

In this transition we have again one of the most beautiful of the many wonderful symbols in the Old Testament history, wonderfully fulfilled in the history of the Church fifteen centuries later, when He, who dwelt forty years in the pillar of cloud, dwelt thirty-three years in the flesh. Thirty-three years in the flesh, three years gloriously manifesting His power, leading His disciples out and in, and sending them forth to do His work, attending them whithersoever they went with a power that made them marvel and

rejoice that even the devils were subject to them, giving them power to heal all manner of diseases and to work the works of God without limit. An amazing commission and position He gave them, and was ever at hand, where they could return to Him, to give them fresh instruction, encouragement, and invigoration. Glorious position! Yes, glorious! Yet what was that to the conquering position into which they passed when they came into the land, into the power of the Spirit, into the fulness of Jesus as an *indwelling* Saviour? The pillar of flesh had ceased, but He who dwelt in it had not ceased to be with them. He was not only with them, but in them in the power of the Spirit.

No longer the pillar of flesh, but now the pillar of Spirit. No longer seen as a pillar without, but now as a pillar within. No longer incarnate with them, but now incarnate in them. Ah, this made all the difference, and the wonderful and blessed significance of this for us cannot be over-estimated. The blessed symbol of the conquering position of Israel in the land with their God in them, was indeed gloriously fulfilled in Pentecostal days in the conquering position of the primitive Church when Christ ceased to be with them in visible form, and took up His abode in them as their invisible Lord, filling them with the fulness of the Holy Ghost. And yet there awaits this symbol a far more glorious expression when the conquering Church shall have "put on Christ," as the apostle bids us to do, and Christ shall again be incarnate in His greater people of the last days. Then will they not limit the Holy One, and He will not fail to lead them on to the greatest and most glorious conquests of the whole world's history, the conquest by which the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. To Israel the removal from them of the visible presence meant the enthronement

ment in them of the invisible Jehovah. While the visible presence was with them they were the people of God, a people whom the whole world could not have conquered, because their Captain with them was the invincible, the Omnipotent One ; but when He was in them, they were still the people of God, a people to conquer the whole world, if He had given it them to do.

This, beloved, is our high vantage-ground to-day, if we take it. We are not straitened in God. It is our high, holy, blessed, glorious privilege to have Him who dwelt in the bush, and in the cloud, and in the flesh, dwell in us, to have the Conquering One within ; and to be in the true conquering position symbolized by Israel in the land, and realised by the primitive Church in the power of the Spirit.

But now let us mark well by what it was that He who dwelt in the bush, the cloud, the flesh, became so gloriously incarnate in His people as to give them the conquering position, and by what was it ? By faith. "That Christ may dwell in you by faith," said the apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians. By faith. It was a faith which staggered not at the promise. Behold, it is in Joshua ! The Lord said to Joshua, "Arise, go over Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them. *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you as I said to Moses.*" And Joshua believed the Lord, and arose and went over and took possession of the land, as the Lord commanded him to do, and proved every word of the promise to be true.

Yea, and when the Lord told him further concerning himself, saying, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life ; as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee ; I will not leave thee nor forsake thee," he staggered not at the

promise, but believed God, and God made every word of the promise good to him. The pillar of cloud did indeed leave him, but this did not stagger him. Had he not the word of Him who dwelt in the cloud that He would not leave him? The cloud might go, but the presence would not, could not go, for God had said it should not. He knew his own weakness, his own nothingness in presence of the giants, the sons of Anak, but this staggered him not, for he believed God and knew that a whole world full of Anak's sons would be only as grasshoppers in the presence of the mighty God.

Behold this faith also in the primitive Church.

Our Lord Jesus said to his Apostles, when about to withdraw His presence in the flesh from them, "I will not leave you comfortless"—orphans alone—"I will come unto you." "I and my Father will come unto you, make our abode with you. I will send you another Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and He shall abide with you for ever. He is with you, and shall be in you. So I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

These were wonderful promises; yet the primitive disciples staggered not at them, but accepted them, and rejoiced in them as certain to be fulfilled, and God made every word good to them. Oh, how gloriously was the presence and power of the Lord with them and in them in the conquering days from Pentecost onward!

Oh, beloved, what hinders the endowment to-day? What but unbelief? Are not the promises ours? Peter said, "The promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." Every promise to Joshua for his day and mission is good to us for ours.

promise to the Apostles for their time and work
; for ours. Take them, stagger not at them.
d make them good, and He will do it again.
glorious boon ! Oh, shameful unbelief that
it ! Was ever anything so glorious for man
ed in his heart until revealed by the Spirit as
God incarnate in us ? God dwelling in us, im-

His own peace and joy, and truth and love ?
welling in us by faith, working in us His own
nd ways of love, and working by us His works
, and going forth in us and by us in all-con-
; love ? Was ever anything else proffered to
omparable with this ? Was ever yet anything
neficial as the unbelief by which the Israel of God
fails to enter into this promised land ? Who
se and go over this Jordan ? Who will believe
eive the promised endowment ?

XXII.

CALEB AND HIS CITY OF ENCHANTMENT.

ENCHANTMENT is, literally, in-singing, or being so filled with joy, that

Life flows on in endless song,
Above earth's lamentations.

En is only another form of *in*, and *chantment* another form of singing.

Fellowship with God is enchanting—nothing else on earth or in heaven so much so. This it was that drew forth from the royal Psalmist such wonderful strains, first from his heart and voice in unwritten words, and then from his pen for the enchantment of others through all generations. And this fellowship with God it was, more than all else in David, which made him a man after God's own heart.

Who is he that is a friend after your own heart? He who enters most into fellowship with you.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother—who is he? He it is who enters into fellowship with you more truly and deeply than a brother.

What makes the unity of the husband and the wife, when it is full, more complete than that between parents and children, or brothers and sisters, or friend and friend, insomuch that they two do leave all for each other, and become one? What is it? Fellow-

ship. They enter into each other's hearts more perfectly than is possible in any other earthly relation. They are after each other's own hearts.

Caleb means "as the heart." He was a man after God's own heart. He followed the Lord wholly. He entered into the promises of the Lord, and they took possession of him. He could have shouted the victory over Jericho forty years before it was taken, if the opportunity had been given him, as truly and as heartily as he did with Joshua and the people on that day when its walls fell down at their shout, and they went up every one straight before him into the city. At last they had to sing, chant, nay, shout their victory by faith, while the walls were still standing and the city still garrisoned. He could have done it that day forty years before just as heartily. Virtually he did do it. Nay, he did more. He, in his heart, shouted the victory of Hebron, that is the victory over Arba, the city of the Four, away in the fastness of the highlands of Canaan, the heights of the enemy, the stronghold of the giants.

Look at the picture. The twelve spies go forth from the camp of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea. Forty days they search the land. They come in disguise to the city of Arba, the city of the Four. They view its giant wells. They enter in and get sight of the three sons of Anak, giant-sons of a giant-father. They mount the walls and gain a look out over the enchanting highlands, bathed in Palestinian sunlight, and dotted with flocks and herds. They see its vine-clad slopes, and fruitful vales, and grassy meads. How does it affect them?

The whole twelve see it in all its beauty, and in wonderful contrast with the sand plains and rugged rocky hills and mountains of the wilderness. But they see another thing ; they see the giant walls and giant warriors between them and possession.

Two of them see all this: but they see yet another thing; they see the promise of the Lord, and they enter into it. It possesses them. They see the Lord with them, the Lord before them; and in virtue of this they see the giant obstacles dwindle into grasshoppers in His presence.

The difference is, that the ten see themselves only, not God; and they see themselves as grasshoppers before the walls and warriors of the land. But the two see the Lord, and not themselves, and see the walls and warriors as nothing before Him.

The ten are in fellowship with man, but not with God. The two are in fellowship with God, and they enter into His plans and purposes as made known in His promises. They are of one heart with Him. They are in the joy of the Lord in the certainty of the inheritance promised to His people. They enter into it—they have it already in heart; it enchanteth them.

To the ten Arba is simply the city of the Four—the home, and capital, and stronghold, the Gibraltar of the four most renowned warriors of the world—a place impregnable—a place terrible—a place whereon to be crushed.

To the two it is Hebron—the City of Enchantment, the place of a crowning victory in the conquest of the land, the place where the Lord would give them for Himself the highest laurels, to be cast at His feet with songs of rejoicing.

Caleb, the man after God's own heart, so entered into fellowship with the Lord in all this that to him already Arba was no more Arba, the stronghold of the four giants of Canaan, but Hebron, the City of Enchantment, the abode of songs, the dwelling-place of fellowship with God.

Then comes the test. The twelve return to the camp. The ten give their picture purely human throughout. God is not in it at all. They report

the land as it is, and the obstacles as they are ; but ail utterly to set God before the people, for they are not men after God's own heart. The two, seeing he fatal defect in the view of the ten, and the terrible nfluence of it in disheartening the people, at once nterpose and exclaim, We be well able to overcome. If the Lord be with us, they shall be bread for us. Only rebel not ye against the Lord. Let us go up t once and possess the land.

Tested they stand. But this is not all. The people ake up stones to stone them to death, and still they tand. They are the Stephens fifteen centuries before Stephen's day ; and if they had met, as he did, the nartyr's fate, they, like him, would have had the nartyr's crown of fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, at the right hand of glory, only heightened in its glory through the cloud of alling stones.

They were spared ; he was translated. They were pared to what ? To forty years' wilderness life while heir hearts were in the land. The City of Enchantment never died out of, no nor even dimmed in, the eart of Caleb during all those forty years. He was compelled to live amongst those in the wilderness ife, and eat with them the surface food, at which they nurmured, but he did not. He was obliged to go in circles about in the desert where no water is, nor any oil, nor any fruits, nor any grain—nothing but arid and and rugged rocks—when he knew the while the traight way up into the land of promise and the City of Enchantment. He must not leave the people ; they vere his people : nay more, they were God's dear hildren, and dear to him because dear to God. As God loved them, and pitied them, and nursed them as a mother does her babes, even so Caleb, in fellowship with God, suffered long, and was loving still, and owing not one whit the less ; yea, much the more,

because he had no fellowship with them in their murmurings, but had full fellowship with the Lord in his suffering love for them.

Forty and five years were gone by. That whole generation, through unbelief kept out of the land, whitened the desert with their bones. Even Moses and Aaron were dead. Only Caleb and Joshua remained alive with the children of the murmurers; the children of whom the murmurers said, They will be a prey. But, oh, how changed the scene ! Out of the wilderness in the land. Jericho taken and destroyed, Arba taken, Gibeah possessed, the country far and near conquered, not entirely. Much land yet remains to be possessed, and right in the pathway of their conquering course stands the giant city, Arba, Caleb's Hebron ; and now what is to be done with that ? Is it Hebron still to Caleb ; or does his courage fail, and the enchanting picture die out of his heart, now that the final test presents itself ?

Behold this man after God's own heart. He does not wait to be asked ; he presents himself of his own accord before Joshua, whose name means Jesus, and asks that the yet unconquered Arba—Hebron he calls it—may be assigned to him as his privilege to conquer and to inherit. And what is his plea ? God's promise made forty and five years ago. And he states two things boldly—two things indispensable to his claim of the promise :—First, the very thing that God had stated when He gave the promise, that he wholly followed the Lord, wherefore the Lord would be with him in his conquest and in his inheritance. And the other thing was that his strength had not abated a single jot : *the Lord had kept him* in full strength and vigour for conquest.

O noble plea ! O glorious reality ! Forty and five years he had lived among his people amid all the shallowness, emptiness, barrenness, dryness, harsh-

ness, wanderings, waywardnesses, murmurings of their wilderness life, yet had lost nothing ; had been kept ; was in fellowship with God as deep, as sweet, as full as ever, and prepared for the conquest of the enemy's strongest hold and most stalwart heroes.

O precious keeping power ! O fellowship sweet as heaven, abiding as God's love ! May more of God's dear children know thee—what thou art, with all thy enchanting peace and joy !

Is it not beautiful, glorious, to see Caleb—the man after God's own heart—tested, tried as he had been through four and forty years, stand before Joshua, the type of Jesus, and ask for Arba, the city of the giants, that he might subdue it, and change it to Hebron, the city of enchantment, upon the plea of God's own promise and God's own faithfulness ?

Nor is the response less beautiful. It is simply Yes, with a blessing added.

Ah, here is the secret of making every Arba a Hebron, and every giant difficulty bread for us. Simply to go to Jesus with it, and ask it upon the plea of God's promise and God's faithfulness ?

What ! while the difficulty stands in the way ?

Yes, while it stands ; that is the very time to claim the promise. If the difficulty was already removed, would you have to ask at all ? Yes, while Arba is Arba still in itself, and the giants are alive, and armed, and within their stronghold, and the walls all standing. Yes, then is the time to claim the promise, and take the victory by first taking the promise.

And if you are not wholly the Lord's, be so at once ; give yourself up to Him to follow Him wholly and for ever, and trust Him to keep you as He kept Caleb, in spite of everything opposing you from within and from without ; and dare to believe He will do it.

And what will be the outcome ? First the Yes of the Lord in your own heart, and then the blessing.

Then, although Arba is Arba still to everybody but you, to you it will be Hebron, and you will begin to sing. Its walls may stand, and its giants may live on to others ; to you it is a transformed stronghold ; its walls have Hebron fellowship over their gates, and its giants are bread for you.

And is this a thing of fancy ? No, but of reality ; just the substance of things hoped for, that is all.

And the things hoped for, will they prove substance ? Follow the Lord wholly, trust in His promise, stand in it unstaggered, and the giants will be giants no more for ever, but only bread for you ; and the city will be Arba no more, but Hebron for ever, and its streets and habitations will be the rivers and homes of song ; enchanting fellowship with God shall run down every street in living streams, and well up in every habitation ; yes, and it shall man all the walls and watch at every gate, welcoming all comers ; for in that day shall this song be sung—

We have a strong city ;
Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks ;
Open ye the gates that the righteous may enter in.
Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on Thee,
Because he trusteth in Thee.
Trust ye in the Lord for ever,
For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

XXIII.

KIRJATH-SEPER, THE CITY OF THE BOOK.

ITS CAPTOR, HIS BRIDE, AND THEIR BLESSING.

WHEN Caleb had taken Hebron, there remained yet of his inheritance to be taken, Kirjath-Sepher, the City of the Book.

Caleb was neither wearied of, nor in, his welfare. He was, as his name indicates, a man after God's own heart, and had for his inheritance Hebron, the City of Enchanting Fellowship. His vigour was not a jot abated by toils or years. The Lord's keeping is perfect, and He had kept Caleb

“Ever fresh and ever young.”

Yet instead of going forward himself to take Kirjath-Sepher, he gave out that whosoever would take it should have Achsah, his daughter, as his wife. Why so?

Ah! the reason was this, that enchanting fellowship with God inspires him who enjoys it with deep desire that others may share with him the blessedness of his inheritance. And in this as in all things else Caleb wholly followed the Lord.

Kirjath-Sepher, the City of the Book, was a beautiful city in a sunny land, and Caleb desired for his

daughter above all things that she might be in it as a bride with her bridegroom. Therefore he made the proclamation.

Achsah means adorned. She was, no doubt, as lovely as her name indicates, wonderfully suited, as a bride adorned for her husband, to grace and to enjoy with him the City of the Book in the sunny south land.

The offer was instantly accepted by Othniel. Caleb probably foresaw this. The name Othniel signifies God's Hour—that is man's golden moment, *now*. And Caleb knew him as a minute-man, ready to strike at the opportune moment. True to his name, Othniel took the city, and received his bride.

No sooner was Achsah settled with her husband in their inheritance than she discovered a grand addition, near at hand, and needful to fill up the measure of their felicity—a field with springs of water, and she moved her husband to go with her and ask it of her father. Of one mind with her Othniel assented, and together they rode from Kirjath-Sepher up toward Hebron. Caleb seeing them approach comes forth and meets them. Dismounting, they salute him, and he asks of his daughter, graciously, “What wouldest thou?”

Achsah answers, “A blessing;” then adds, “Thou hast given us a south land, give us also springs of water.”

Oh Achsah! Achsah! Having already received so much of thy generous father unasked, is it not too much for thee to ask of him anything more?

No, no; not so did her father think for a moment. But, oh, what must have been the joyful surprise of Othniel and Achsah at the response! Springs of water? Yes. The nearer field, with its living waters? Yes, certainly, gladly, and the farther field with its water-springs too. Double over more than they asked.

THE CITY OF THE BOOK

Is a wonderful city. It has palaces in abundance for princes ; and it has also beautiful houses and cottages for every grade of the people, and one temple for all. It has treasures untold, and of every variety ; and it has gardens more beautiful than even the renowned ones of Babylon in the days of its magnificence, with every manner of fruit in its season, and food in abundance for all its inhabitants, and all gladdened by the river of God. There is no lack for anybody. Then it is, oh ! so cheery to those who are really in it—a sunny land indeed !

A MINUTE-MAN,

and he only, can be the captor of the City of the Book. Those who parley about taking it fail of it entirely. They may dig away and seek to undermine its walls, and to make a breach in them, and so to get possession ; but in this they get task-work in abundance, and weariness often, and hunger, and disappointment, with failure in the end. Only he who takes it by a single *coup de main* of faith, can take it at all.

Do you see what this means ?

Othniel, as you may understand at a glance, must first take the city on trust. He must first jump to the conclusion that inside the walls there is a city with its palaces, treasures, gardens, and things worth taking. The walls outside he does see, but the inside of every palace and treasure-house and garden is entirely beyond his vision—shut in and shut out. All he can do is to believe and go forward.

Once taken, he could then freely explore, and freely appropriate, and freely distribute, none to molest or to

hinder, but until taken as a whole he can see nothing of its parts, and do nothing with them.

There are those who do not see this at all in reference to the Book. They parley about it, and stay outside. They think it must be taken piecemeal, and that it must be seen through first in each part, and then accepted.

But, oh, how absurd such a conclusion would have been for Othniel !

There were other youthful warriors under Caleb, no doubt, to whom the city was offered with the bride, but they did not take it. He did. Why ? Because they parleyed, and he struck. So they lost, and he won both the city and the bride. Did they wait to inquire what was in it worth taking ? He did not, but took it on trust. Did they parley about whether they were strong enough to cope with the difficulties it presented ? He did not, but threw himself instantly upon the promise, "not a man shall be able to stand before you ; every place whereon thou settest thy foot shall be thine."

There is just one way to take the City of the Book. That is, blind. Close its two lids, and clasp it between your two hands, and say, I take this as God's own, and every word in it I believe to be true, whether I understand it or not.

This done, it is yours. God's gift to you is accepted by you. And it *is* yours.

Then as to possession in detail, every part as you come to it must be accepted as yours, before you enter into it at all. You cannot enter into it in any other way.

Can you imagine Othniel and Achsah entering the city to explore it, and going from palace to palace, treasure to treasure, garden to garden, wondering whether each belonged to them or not, thinking of this and that, and the other, that they could not be

theirs, because they had been built or adorned for others?

Why, they had taken it altogether, and every part was their own.

But, if they had so gone through it, not one thing of all about which the question of right was raised could they have taken possession and enjoyed as their own. It would have been Doubting Castle, and not the City of the Book to them.

The Bride for us means

THE BRIDAL POSITION.

Christ is our Bridegroom. In the household of our Father there is neither male nor female; all alike are entitled to the bridal position, if they will take it; such is our Father's proclamation. Yet the bridal position can only be taken by those who take the Book, first as a whole, and then take this proclamation in the Book in particular. The City must first be taken before the Bride can be claimed, according to the proclamation. Then, but not till then, can the Bridegroom put the Bride in possession and defend her in it for ever.

How does the Bride enter upon her inheritance? Independently of the Bridegroom? How did Achsah come into possession of the City of the Book? Did she take it herself for herself? No doubt she was a deeply interested looker-on when Othniel went forth for the capture. Yet all she could do was to go with him in heart, and let him fight the battle for her.

All we can do is to put our case into the hands of our Champion Bridegroom, and let Him fight our battles for us. He only is able to cope with our giant foes, and to give us our City, and put us in possession of its palaces and treasures. We may safely trust Him to do it. His is the right to do it. He is the

rightful owner of all, and of us too, won by His own hand, in the dread conflict wherein His own life was put.

Then, too, He won us for this very purpose, to give us our inheritance with Him in all the treasures and wonders of the City of the Book, and He won us with His life because He loved us better than life, and gave Himself for us. His, too, are all resources, and His is the Guide. And you know that the Guide, who Himself was the Guide of holy men of old by whom the city was built, every stone of it, bit by bit, and all its treasures laid up in it one by one, and He alone can guide us into the actual comprehension and enjoyment of it, step after step.

He will do it, too, so wonderfully, if we only trust Him with the whole heart and follow Him fully.

THE ADDED BLESSING.

How is it received, and what is it worth? It is not a thing won by conquest out of the hand of the enemy, but received as a bounty from our Father. From *our* Father, I say. Bride and Bridegroom go together to receive it, to ask it that they may receive it. The Bride does the asking in union with and in presence of the Bridegroom, and in His name, for His name is now hers. They are one. Together in this way they ask it, and ask it as a bounty, not as a claim, and ask it of their own Father, whose bounteousness they fully confide in.

Do you understand this?

Some do not. Some take the servant's place and go as a servant may go in his master's name; but a servant will never gain the reception of a son or a daughter. A prodigal son returning to ask the lowest place as a servant will be received as a son; but a servant will only be received as a servant, much

less will a servant receive the bounty which can be given only as an additional dower of the bride.

Some go in the name of the bride, and go *as* the bride, but fail to move the Bridegroom to go with them. They go by themselves, in their own head, and they fail.

So did not Achsah. She first made sure that the thing to be asked was not only right itself, and very desirable to have, but that Othniel was one with her in the matter. We may well believe that she would not have stirred one step without him. This is just what the words of our Lord convey to us when He says, “if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

What it is to ask in faith has been put in another way very encouraging to those who do not so well understand the exceeding bounteousness of our Father, and the wonderful advantage of the bridal position. Take any promise, they say, as an errand-boy would take a cheque on a bank, bearing the signature of one who has money there in deposit, and go with it to God as the errand-boy would go with the cheque to the counter of the bank, and take what it demands, and take it as what you are entitled to upon the strength of the promise in the name of the promiser.

This is indeed very encouraging. But tell me is not the other infinitely more so?

A bride and bridegroom going to their father, whose bounty has been gloriously shown, and wondrously pledged, but never exhausted, and going to ask of him what will still further illustrate his liberality and his love while it greatly enriches them. Ah! this is another thing altogether from an errand-boy with his cheque at the counter of a bank, whose teller tells out the amount to a farthing and no more.

Achsah comes herself with her husband; she is no

errand-boy with a cheque. They come not at all with a demand, but with a request for a blessing. A blessing means a bounty, not a due. They expect it, and are prepared to receive it, not as a thing due to them, but as a gift out of the love their Father has already shown to them.

And they do receive. In what measure? The measure of demand? No; but in the measure of bounty, twice over more than all they ask or think.

This is the measure of the blessing. Its preciousness they clearly understood, and so may we.

Any field in the promised land depends largely for its value upon its water supply. Pasturage may come from the rains alone, but fruitage must come mainly from irrigation. Springs, therefore, although not an absolute necessity, are a very great boon. However fair to the sun or rich the soil of a field, it will not yield the olive and the vine, or the wheat and the barley, without water.

One, according to the showing of this wonderful bit of history, may come to be a servant, a son, an heir, yea, a bride of the Lamb, and be brought into the City of the Book, with its palaces and treasures, and have with it a sunny south land, and yet after all not come into possession of the springs of water, though they be ever so desirable and ever so near at hand.

The well of water springing up into everlasting life was very near to the woman at the well, but it was only when she asked and received that her life became so wonderfully fruitful.

The Fountain of living waters was not afar off from any one of the assembled multitude to whom our Saviour's voice came in the Temple on that last and great day of the feast, when He stood and proclaimed that rivers of water should flow forth from those who should put their trust in Him.

The amazing fulness of this blessing was shown

when this proclamation began to have its fulfilment
in that same city of Jerusalem, in the upper chamber,
and in the Temple where the proclamation was made.
And, oh, what glorious fruitage followed the blessing !

Yes, yes, beloved ! here is the law of the blessing
of blessings, the added blessing to the bride :

Union between Bride and Bridegroom in asking,
And bounty from the Father in giving.

XXIV.

THE THRONE: FOUNTAIN WITHIN YOU.

THE heart is a throne, and the throne is a fountain. The throne is never empty, and the fountain never ceases to flow. But the streams from the fountain may be either rivers of the water of life or of death, according to which it is, whether Christ or the flesh, in the throne.

The Scriptures present for our acceptance by faith the privilege of being made one with Christ in practical union by mutual indwelling.

WE IN CHRIST, AND HE IN US.

The side of the union for which we need most the strengthening might of God by His Spirit is that of the indwelling of Christ in us by faith.

For us poor bankrupts in everything pertaining to life and godliness, it is easier to accept our solvency in heaven in Christ, than on earth through Christ in us.

- We can with comparative ease believe that in Christ above we are complete, and that in Him there is for us, stored up, all fulness, to be made ours, a little now, more by-and-by, and finally in all completeness; but, oh, how hard to accept the reality of the presence of our blessed Saviour with us and within us, in all His fulness for us, for the walk and the work

and the worship and the warfare of life from this time henceforth for ever!

Was it not the knowledge of our weakness on this side, that led the apostle to pray so earnestly to the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to strengthen us with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ might dwell in us by faith?

Yet the promises of God are as full and clear, and explicit, to say the least of it, for the indwelling of Christ in us as for our indwelling in Him.

Many distinct veins, in type, and teaching and testimony, showing forth this glorious provision of God for us, run through and through His word from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. First, that of

CHRIST IN US OUR LIFE.

To begin where God begins, with the type, how beautiful the picture of this in the garden of God in the opening of Genesis!

The real garden was a garden within the garden, in the souls of Adam and Eve. That was, like its external type, planted by the Lord, and watered by a river out of His throne in their hearts, parted into four heads, like the four living ones above upon the throne, the four evangelists, and it brought forth all manner of fruit and flowers good for food and beautiful to the eye, fruit of the Spirit, and incense to God, sweeter to Him than that of the flowers from their ten thousand censers to them.

Nor did the river of life become the river of death, or the garden in their souls become a desolation, until they yielded to Satan and gave the throne in their hearts up to the flesh instead of God.

Twin to the picture of the garden of God in the

opening of Genesis, is that of the city of God in the close of Revelation.

The garden has become a city, a great city, a multitude which no man can number—the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, City of Peace. It is built as the garden was planted, by the Lord Himself. Its walls are living walls, each stone a living stone most precious. Its foundations are apostles and prophets, and its gates of pearl are the tribes of the family of our God. And in the midst of it is the throne of God and the Lamb, out of which flows the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, with its islands and banks covered with the tree of life, bearing fruits as various as the peculiarities of twelve tribes and twelve apostles, and yielding its fruit as continually as the twelve months of the year roll on, and its leaves for the healing of the nations. This is the picture of the city of God above, do you say? And of that city as a whole? Yes truly, but it is the City of God come down from heaven amongst men, the tabernacle of God with us, yea within us. For as the Church as a whole is just what its members are in their individual character and life, so the City of God is in all its beauty and glory as the Bride of the Lamb, made up of the living stones, the living ones in whom He who is our life dwells in His beauty.

See how this is exemplified in connection with this very picture! Who and what is he to whom it is shown by the angel?

John the beloved, all ripe for the kingdom above; why? Because the kingdom is ripe within him. Throne, river, freshness, fruitage, in his own variety and all Christ in Him the hope of glory. His white flowing hair, and the mellow light of his meek and loving countenance, already begin to take on the very sweetness of the glory into which he is merging through the indwelling of the glorified One in him by faith.

And love, love, love; light, light, light; life, life, life, in God and the Lamb, are the fruit of his lips continually.

But we are not left to symbol and example alone. The words of Christ and His apostles tell us of the indwelling in us by faith, of Christ our Life, as plainly as words can speak.

And that not only in such distinct confessions as that of St. Paul in which he says, "I am crucified, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and as that exultant assurance of his, "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory;"—but our Lord Himself has taken the greatest pains to place it before us in the words of His own lips in the most unequivocal forms.

In that last precious interview with His disciples before going forth to the agonies of Gethsemane and the judgment hall and the cross, He first showed them by symbol and word that their feet must be washed by Him in the daily walk, or they could have no part or lot in it with Him.

This first, then, as to the indwelling. He first assured them that He would send upon them the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, who should dwell in them for ever.

Then He went further, and promised to come to them Himself.

Then still further, telling them that He and His Father would come and make their abode with them.

And the vital union from this abiding He compared with that of the vine and the branches.

And then enjoined them to abide in Him and He in them.

And finally, with eyes uplifted to His Father, He asked in our behalf that we might be one with Him, as He is one with the Father. He in us, and we

in Him, as He is in the Father, and the Father in Him.

And all this especially for life here upon earth, that the world might know that the Father had sent Him, and might believe in His so loving the world even as He loves His own only begotten Son.

What more could He have said ?

AS THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN DAILY LIVING.

Is there not a charm in these words, abide, abode, dwell, dwelling, indwelling, and the like, which we at best only faintly appreciate ?

They do express permanence, and that is a great deal. Surely it is a wonderful boon to us, when we can so come into Christ, and He into us, that the intervals of absence cease, and all our moments are filled up by the cheer and sunshine of the faith of this real and perpetual presence of Christ ; but there is, oh, so much more in these words than this. They speak of an every-day home-making, with its community of love and interest, and interchanged between our precious Bridegroom and ourselves. We are to make a home in Him, and He in us continually.

He is indeed to come in and sup with us, and we with Him, when we open the door to Him. But there He is to tarry for the night. Nay, He is to go no more out for ever, but make a home in us and with us always. Not as a guest, not as our servant, no, but as our Lord, our King, our Husband, Brother, Father, everything that is loving and lovely in one. And oh what a daily life is ours in this home-making between our Lord and ourselves ! As a Son over His own house, whose house are we, He takes possession of us, and we of Him. And then how sweet the outflow of the rivers of the water of life ! In the domestic life, how gentle, loving, and kind ! In the business

life, how true and peaceful and upright! In the social life, how pure and harmonious and happy! And in the public life, how honest, unselfish, and loyal! How blessed at all times and everywhere, to have one at hand to counsel and direct and sustain you and care for you, and bear you above your cares and fears, and keep you in His own perfect peace!

Beloved, this is not fancy but fact, and we have it in the word of God. Oh that every dear child of God had it in their own experience through faith in Christ on the strength of His word!

AS THE SOURCE OF REAL WORSHIP.

If we fail of the charm of such words as are used to convey to us the reality provided for us in Christ of home-making in the every-day life, do we not fail yet more, if it be possible, of the beautiful and blessed significance of the symbol of worship—temple of God?

Temples of God. What does that mean? The home of the soul in God, and of God in the soul in endless worship.

Times of worship. Yes, there are indeed times of worship, when prayer and praise with joyous thanksgiving flow forth in word and action; but through the faith of an indwelling God and Saviour there is a worship even in silence as perpetual and easy as breathing,—rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything the giving of thanks. Rivers of worship flow forth spontaneously from the throne-fountain in us, when God and the Lamb are in the throne.

Nor is there one particle of real worship from any other source.

Take the grandest assembly of worshippers ever convened upon earth, and lead them through the most perfect round of acts of worship ever engaged in

by men or angels, and of true worship, what have you in it?

Just so much, and no more, as you have in the hearts of the worshippers spontaneously flowing forth from God enthroned in them. All else is husk and shell, not spirit and truth.

Oh how beautifully this is symbolized in the temple! Ye are the temple of God. In the Holy of Holies, without a window, without a lamp, without the provision for so much as a single ray of created light, dwelt the Lord himself in the mercy seat upon the Ark of the Covenant, sprinkled with blood, and anointed with oil. God and the Lamb ever the light of it. It needed no other light; indeed it could have no other light than the light of the Lord, Himself. So with us in our inner man. If the Lord dwell not there, all is dark. If the Lord come not in, all must remain dark for ever.

The inner surface of the temple too, all overlaid with pure gold, the symbol of Christ. How beautifully does this show us that Christ must be put on, within as well as without, as all in all, for sanctification, even as in the crimson skins over the tabernacle He was shown as our covering.

Then, too, the blood-sprinkling, the anointing, the shew-bread, and the incense and the altar of sacrifice, and the laver for feet-washing, and the ministry of Aaron and his sons. How they all speak of Christ the High Priest and His blood, and the Comforter given by Him as an indwelling Saviour and God.

AS THE SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT.

Do you not believe that the reason of our lameness in the government within, comes all from the mistake of putting it upon the wrong shoulders?

I do not so much ask this concerning the govern-

ment of our actions and words as of our thoughts and affections. It is quite possible to keep such a control over our tongue and our hands, that they shall not smite anybody, but can we bring every thought of our heart into captivity to Christ? Can we so govern our affections that rivers of love shall proceed out of them?

When we try to do this, do we succeed?

Are our minds and hearts made for self-government?

Are they not made to be governed by the Lord?

In the shadows of the old dispensation there was the government of the flesh with its awful bondage in Egypt, and of the law with its strictness and severity of death-penalty in the wilderness. And in the land there was the government of Judges, self-government very fitful and eccentric, the sum of which we have in the last verse of the Book of Judges. In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes. And then when David was made king in Hebron they had good government over Judah and Benjamin. But it was only when the ten tribes joined with the two and made David king over all Israel that good government was extended over the whole land, and the stronghold Jebus in Jerusalem was taken and converted into Zion, and the entire country given to Israel for an inheritance was taken actually into possession.

When Christ is accepted and enthroned in the heart as an indwelling King and the government is laid over upon His shoulders, then, indeed, it is in the hands of one who can expel all His enemies, and only by the power of a new affection, even the affection for the new King, chiepest among ten thousands.

Yes, and the will, that stiffnecked thing. Oh, how

He can make us willing in the beauties of holiness, and keep it so. And once the government shifted over from ourselves upon Him, there is no end to the increase of it, until its sway extends to the minutest details of life, nor any cessation in the peace of it, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom to order it and to establish it from henceforth for ever.

Let us hasten, then, if we have not already done it, to lay the key of David over upon the Son given unto us. So shall He open before us—and no man can shut—the door of His treasure-house of wisdom and truth and grace, peace and power, and He shall shut and no man shall open the door, for His enemies and ours to come in, or to have dominion over us. The symbol of the City of God, which with that of the Garden of God is the clasp of the whole Book of the Law and the Testimony, has its completeness in individual realisation when, and only when, Christ is brought out of Hebron the city of enchanting fellowship with God, and crowned King of Zion over all Israel, over all our powers, faculties, interests, and possessions, and the Key of all is laid upon His shoulders.

Then, and not till then, will the rivers of the water of life flow forth from the throne-fountain clear as crystal, parted into four heads—life, living, worship, and government.

THE END.



